

Ballet

TODAY

MARCH, 1961

TWO SHILLINGS



THE FINISHING TOUCH

for two Sugar Plum Fairies

Marilyn Burr and Jeannette Minty of London's Festival Ballet

Ballet

TODAY

A MONTHLY REVIEW DEVOTED TO DANCE
ESTABLISHED 1946

IN THIS ISSUE

MARCH 1961

No. 2. Vol. 13

COVER PORTRAIT

Marilyn Burr and Jeannette Minty of Festival Ballet complete their make-up whilst waiting for a press photo-call.

Photographed by Houston Rogers.

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Above left: Lynn Seymour in the role of the innocent young girl, with Desmond Doyle as The Husband in The Invitation.

Opposite: Paula Hinton (seen here in Winter Night) featured in our Careers in Pictures series this month.

Edited and Published by

ESTELLE HERF

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Flight to Moscow

BENN TOFF, now Administrator of Festival Ballet, flew out to Moscow during January to make preliminary arrangements in connection with the production of *Snow Maiden* which, as I reported in *Ballet Today* December issue, the Company hope to première early this year on their European tour, and in London during their summer season. Ostrovski's play *The Snow Maiden* was produced at the Bolshoi on 11th May, 1873 in four Acts and a Prologue on music by Tchaikovsky. In 1947 the Bolshoi produced the ballet of this name with the same music, and later, in Leningrad, with orchestration by Asafiev. Benn Toff's mission in Moscow was to find the original score of the Tchaikovsky music. He found it in the archives of the Bolshoi but due to its age it was impossible to make a photostat copy. Copies are now being made by hand in Russia. This music has never been used before in the Western world, so that the première will also be an extremely important musical event in London.

Whilst in Moscow Mr. Toff made himself acquainted with *Ballet Today* correspondent, Nina Karasyova, who was tremendously helpful to him in his quest. They are seen here together in my picture in the Red Square.

Service from Moscow

As everyone will know, the Russians are pretty conscientious in everything to do with their ballet, but they even surprised me last month. They sent me a batch of photographs of Nadia Nerina in Moscow. One arrived without a caption and I could not identify all the members of a group. I enlisted the aid of Soviet News in London. They airmailed the picture back to Moscow. Moscow replied by Telex—at £6 a minute.

The Sixty-Four Dollar Question

One of these days Dame Margot Fonteyn will fold up her tent like the Arabs and silently steal away and even then no doubt there will still be rumours about whether (a) her retirement is temporary, or (b) her return to ballet imminent. The recent publication of a report from Montreal of her plan to retire at the end of the present year caused such a jamming of lines at Covent Garden that they were forced to telephone for confirmation or denial to the Company on their American tour. Covent Garden now deny this remark of Dame Margot's was intended as a statement of her plans. However, columnists like myself learn not to take anything at face value, often before denials are in print decisions are reversed. The only thing that is certain at this stage is that Dame Margot has existing engagements which take her up to 1962. So take heart from this fact.

LET me say from the start that the award of an M.B.E. to Miss Rowena Jackson in the New Year's Honours gave us all great pleasure, and we offer her our sincerest congratulations. But—and someone must say this—it is very difficult to understand why year after year certain names fail to appear. They belong to men and women who have done so much for British ballet, and consequently for British prestige abroad, that there can be no dispute about the value of their work to this and future generations. Cyril Beaumont, for instance, that great scholar and authority to whom for many years we have all turned; author, critic, historian, founder of the Cecchetti Society. The French Government awarded him the Palmes Académiques and the Légion d'Honneur. Surely it is time his work be recognised in this his own country?

Then take the case of the man who was not British born but has, individually, probably shouldered a greater burden than any other living person in the world of ballet—Dr. Julian Braunschweig, who brought a ballet company to London in 1924, and from 1939 has remained here ever since, doing his bit during the war years with ENSA, entertaining the Forces in France and Belgium. In 1950 he founded London's Festival Ballet and almost from the start drew enormous audiences to the Royal Festival Hall from all over the world. After a few years, without the benefit of a Government subsidy, it was inevitable that his Company should run into serious



To Rowena Jackson an M.B.E. for services to ballet in New Zealand

financial difficulties. A man of lesser stature would have abandoned the whole project; one thing is certain, he would have reaped a greater personal reward if he had used his forty years' experience as an impresario to further his own fortune and not that of his Company. As it was he refused to be daunted by the enormous debts piling up and found a way to take his dancers to many parts of the world as well as giving the Company a regular summer and Christmas season in London. Wherever

they went abroad the Company was fêted and honours were bestowed upon Dr. Braunschweig. In the British Council's Annual Report (1959/60) appeared the following: "The Festival Ballet's tour of Latin America in the spring of 1960 was an unqualified success, and, in the words of one of our Ambassadors, 'raised British prestige higher than it has stood for years'."

Let us hope that Dr. Braunschweig's contribution to the prestige of a country whose nationality he adopted some years ago will not continue to be overlooked.

There are others whose dedicated work and singleness of purpose have brought joy to the lives of their fellow humans and prestige to this country. Anton Dolin, who with our first British ballerina Alicia Markova, brought ballet to hundreds of thousands in places where it had never been seen. Peggy van Praagh, dancer and teacher, who has mounted ballets in Canada, Munich, Copenhagen and is at the present time in Australia doing a wonderful job as Artistic Director for the Borovansky Ballet. These are the names which spring most readily to mind; there are others, of course, who have made their mark and to whom our respect and thanks are due, but it would make those of us in ballet who have no axe to grind a great deal happier if the work of these great people be publicly recognised now. Until this is done we shall regard further awards like the student who failed to get top marks in class but was voted "the one most likely to succeed".



The Dancer's Textbook

Hungarian ballerina Zsuzsa Kun, who flew into London to take part in five performances of Festival Ballet's *Nutcracker* season, surprised everyone by her knowledge of our ballet companies, productions and dancers. When she was asked how she managed to keep so well informed she replied "by reading *Ballet Today*." She also learned English by reading ballet magazines.

50th Anniversary

On 28th January this year Walter Gore celebrated the 50th anniversary of his first appearance on stage. As a babe in arms he was wrapped in a shawl and carried on by his mother. (As it was a Victorian melodrama, one can imagine that at some time they must both have been driven out into the cold, cold snow by the rapacious villain.) Mr. Gore has been on the stage one way or another ever since, and, by a curious coincidence, the ballet he made in Amsterdam recently (*Parade*, reviewed on page 21) was his fiftieth ballet.

Deep, crisp, but uneven

Talking of snow, the fairylike transformation scene in *Nutcracker* is always a problem one way or another but the snowstorm is a regular debating point. If there is not enough the audience feels cheated—it *must* be cheap enough to produce. If there is too much it is dangerous for the dancers (nylon snowflakes are a bit slippery to dance on). But Alicia Markova told me of a new hazard. When she danced the Sugar Plum Fairy in one well-known opera house they swept up the snow each night and used it again and again. After the first few sweepings it contained plenty of dust, the only time she complained was when nails and cigarette ends fell on her head during the performance.

Rambert on TV

I reported last month that Ballet Rambert's *La Sylphide* is to be televised. The transmission will take place March 31st on B.B.C. programme from 8.40–9.30 p.m. Lucette Aldous will take the role of the Sylphide and Flemming Flindt that of James.

tour of Italy

From 2nd May to the 18th Ballet Rambert will tour Italy. Dates at time of going to press are Florence 3rd May, one day only, Rome (6th to 8th), one day in Turin (10th May), two days in Genoa (11th to 12th) and three days in Bologna.

Prix Terpsichore

For the sixth year, the international organisation founded by Alice Nikitina, star of Diaghilev's Russian Ballet, will hold examinations in Paris to discover the most promising talent in classical ballet. To the winner goes the *Prix Terpsichore*, a scholarship awarded annually in honour of Serge Diaghilev. Runners-up receive diplomas and medals.

Last year competitors entered from many countries. First prize went to seventeen-year-old Andrea Link from Hamburg. The organisation, which is strictly non-profit making, is under the patronage of the Ministry of Education in France and S.A.S. Prince Pierre of Monaco. The Committee of Honour contains many illustrious names in the world of dancing, painting and literature.

Competitors wishing to enter must do so by the 1st May. The contest takes place on the 26th June.

For further details write to Alice Nikitina, 9, Quai Anatole-France, Paris 7.e.

Dolin and Gilpin in Milan

Anton Dolin and John Gilpin appear at La Scala Milan for five performances (21st, 25th, 28th February, 5th and 8th March) in *Coppelia*, staged by Frederick Franklyn under the personal supervision of Alexandra Danilova.

Dolin has the role of Dr. Coppélius, with Gilpin as Franz and Carla Fracci as Swanilda.



Beryl Grey
for Japan

The Royal Ballet

in London

The Royal Ballet ended its sixth tour of North America on the 29th January, having given 140 performances in 26 cities. The dancers from this tour will appear at Covent Garden for the first time on 2nd March with Margot Fonteyn and Michael Somes in *Ondine*. Later performances will include Sibley and Usher in *Coppelia*, Nerina and Blair in *La Fille Mal Gardée*.

in Japan

The Company led by Margot Fonteyn and Beryl Grey are to open the East to West Festival on 17th April at Tokyo's new Festival Hall. They will remain in Japan for nearly four weeks giving performances in two other theatres in Tokyo and four appearances in Osaka.

in Russia

It is expected that the Royal Ballet will open in Moscow on 15th June, giving 25 performances in Moscow and Leningrad.

* * *

On the 27th January Pirmin Trecu of the Royal Ballet gave his farewell performance in *La Fête Étrange*. He now takes over the dance department of the Parnasso School in Oporto.

Christopher Gable, who created the role of the Young Man in Kenneth Macmillan's new ballet *The Invitation*, has become engaged to Carole Needham of Huddersfield, also, with the Royal Ballet.

OBITUARY

In February the death of David Paltenghi at the early age of 40 occurred at Windsor.

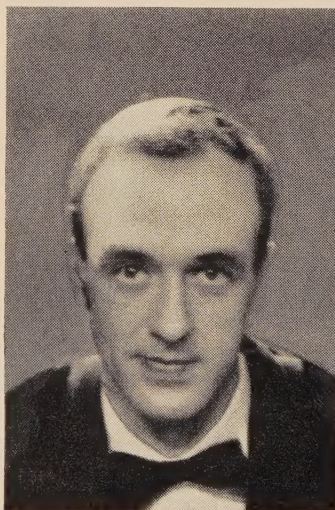
Although David Paltenghi arranged ballets during the latter part of his dancing career, most who remember him will think of him as dancer, not choreographer.* Encouraged by Dolin, he began dancing comparatively late, made his debut in *The Planets* (London Ballet, 1939) and, after creating the Nobleman in *Fête Étrange*, joined Sadler's Wells (1941–1948). He later worked with Rambert and in films.

Though no virtuoso, Paltenghi was an entirely superlative partner and a magnificent stage personality. Physically a living Michelangelo drawing, he set Fonteyn off better than any other partner, since his physique and strongly masculine style made her appear both more insubstantial and more feminine by sheer contrast. As the King in *Hamlet* and the Official in *Gorbals* Paltenghi is irreplaceable, and his absence contributed to the surprising lack of impact of these two ballets in recent revival, for no successors here have been more than pale shadows. Indeed, the Royal Ballet today sadly lacks performers of Paltenghi's strength, conviction and noble appearance; personally, I have never seen an Elihu or an Eusebius to touch him.

Janet Sinclair

* Paltenghi's ballets included *Eve of St. Agnes*, *Scherzi della Sorte*, etc.

News from here and there



Heino Heiden

Mannheim

Heino Heiden has a three-year contract with the Mannheim National theatre and a

free hand in engaging a new corps de ballet. After his first full evening of choreography (*Le Baiser de la Fée* and Egk's *Danza*), premièred 6th December, 1960, another full evening of his new works is due on 4th April (Ravel's *Daphnis et Cloé*, Stravinsky's *Dances Concertantes* and *La Fille Mal Gardée*).

Munich

Ballerina Dulce Anaya now lives in a flat in Lucile Grahn Street!

The Munich State Opera Ballet has been invited to give a tour through a dozen cities in India, Burma and Hongkong. The trip is sponsored by the German Foreign Office and will begin on 18th March—lasting for 4–5 weeks. The company will consist of 18 dancers.

Heinz Rosen will film his ballet *Joan v. Zarissa* for TV (1st March).

Cologne

The Cologne Conservatory of Music are to add an Institute of Stage Dancing as of October 1961 which will be directed by Aurel Milloss. The Krefeld International Academy of Dancing is due to be incorporated with this new Institute.

Letters to the Editor

Madam,

I have recently read in your December issue, the criticism by Fernau Hall of the Ballet *Sound Barrier*. This was performed at the Lyric Theatre by the Sunday Ballet Club on November 13th, 1960.

May I please use your pages to express my amazement at Mr. Hall's comments? He appears to have ignored the dancers' message and to have failed completely to grasp the import of the whole piece. In this ballet, Darrell was concerned with the problem of deafness and not, as Mr. Hall would have us believe, of racial discrimination. This was surely obvious.

I am surprised that so perceptive a critic can ever have formed the ideas propounded. I can only assume that Mr. Hall was not at his best on that occasion or that, perhaps, he did not see the whole work. It would please me to see this letter printed and possibly hear your critic's explanation. At the time of writing, my faith in his judgment has suffered a severe reversal.

Yours faithfully,
J. BOYCE KERR,
West Derby, Liverpool.

Fernau Hall replies:

I am grateful to J. B. Kerr for raising the matter of the deafness of the two principals in *Sound Barrier*. Like many others, I was staggered to find out, after the event, that these two were supposed to be deaf. This was in fact very far from being obvious: nothing was said in the programme on this vital point, and the choreography was equally unexplicit. It is essential that the programme should be as specific as possible about the content and theme of a ballet—particularly when it is given for a single performance; and I hope in future the directors of the Sunday Ballet Club will take a firm line with choreographers in this matter.

Dear Editor,

I should like to thank you for a wonderful magazine to which I always look forward to reading; it keeps us poor ballet fans at the southernmost tip of Africa in touch with all the balletic events overseas, and the photographs are simply delicious. Congratulations!

In your December issue of *Ballet Today* you published a criticism by Mary Kenwood on the Celebrity Ballet in Johannesburg. You had to use reviews by the two leading Cape Town newspapers for your remarks about the Celebrity Ballet's visit to Cape Town. Is it possible for us to have our own critic here? We have the very successful University of Cape Town Ballet Company under Miss Dulcie Howes, which is flourishing, and has quite a considerable repertoire to its credit.

Lately, very fine performances of *The Nutcracker*, *Pineapple Poll* and *Blood Wedding* have passed almost unnoticed by balletomanes outside South Africa and the Rhodesias. Indeed, *Blood Wedding* has been said to be better performed out here than overseas, in London. At the Union Festival Gary Burne appeared with the company in May of this year. Consider, too, the famous dancers the Royal Ballet School has sent overseas, David Poole, Patricia Miller, Pamela Chrimes and choreographers. With a company of this reputation and ever-growing popularity I feel that we could do with a critic of some sort.

Yours faithfully,
MISS KATHRYN BALCHIN,
Cape Town, South Africa

The Editor replies: *Although Ballet Today has the widest world news coverage of any British magazine, we are aware that there are still gaps. The appointment of critics must of necessity be a slow and serious business and first-rate critics are very hard to find. However, I have great pleasure in announcing that Marina Grut, until recently our critic in Copenhagen, will as from early 1961 be moving to South Africa and report the news for us from Cape Town.*

Dear Editor,

Having but recently returned to my own islands from six years in foreign parts, and having become a resident for a while as against being a perpetual visitor, so to speak, I last night attended in joyful anticipation London's Holy of Ballet Holies.

Before the evening began, the great curtain parted and there before it stood a man in evening dress, complete with a piece of paper in his hand, to announce a change of cast in one of the ballets.

Seldom, if ever, Dear Editor, even in the lowliest of provincial theatres, have I heard a more bumbling, fumbling, mumbling, stumbling announcement. Well deserved were the tittering jibes of the audience.

One really would think that after all these years of our Royal Theatre presenting our Royal Ballet, the Directors would be capable of manners better than this.

Who is responsible, one wonders, for such a Harvest Festival approach to what, with all due respect, is just not a Harvest Festival.

Yours truly,
WALTER GORE

London, January 13th, 1961

Dear Mrs. Herf,

At the very outset I wish to say that your magazine is one of the most interesting and it is a treasure for people like me, who are rather deprived from the sight of ballets and dances; we feel up to date when we read it. I first got familiarised with *Ballet Today* seven years ago in Egypt, where I bought it every month.

As I am now working with an Air Company in Rome, I have availed myself of free tickets to come to London and Paris just to see ballet performances, and it has been all the more interesting to read in your magazine the reviews of your critics on the ones I had managed to see.

It is a pity that Ballet Companies do not come often in Rome and I am eagerly awaiting the visit of the Ballet Rambert and Miss Lucette Aldous which has been already announced here.

From what I gathered in *Ballet Today*, Festival Ballet will come to Florence and Rome: would it be possible to know, as soon as they are fixed, the dates of these visits, especially the one from Florence? (1)

There is also another question which I would like to put in: I saw the Russians dance last year at the Royal Albert Hall and I would have loved to buy as a souvenir a record of the music of Pagni for the ballet "The Ocean and the Pearls," so well described by Mrs. J. Sinclair as a "gem of period nonsense." I looked for it in London at the time, but could not find it. Do you think the only way to get it is to write to Moscow? Perhaps Mr. B. Crowle could answer me. (2)

I think there is a mistake in page 10 of February's issue which I have just received by post two days ago: there is a photograph of two dancers of the Ballet Zuimaaluti (I have seen it last week in Rome and quite agree with Mr. Fernau Hall), and under it there is written:

Georges Skibine and Marjorie Tallchief in Idylle. (3)

I saw this ballet in Cairo in 1954 and would have liked to actually see the picture of both the above dancers. This discrepancy must have been noticed only after distribution and I imagine it was cause for dismay, but never mind, your magazine is so nice and one may consider it as a test!

LEDA ROSSETTO, Rome.

(1) The dates are: Rome 5th-11th, Florence 20th-23rd June.

(2) Bedford Crowle replies: I doubt whether this has been recorded, even in Russia, but I will try to find out.

(3) Yes, unfortunately, this was a mistake; the picture was of E'sa Garcia Galvez and Arthur Ferreira in *Zuimaaluti*.

Letters to the Editor should be clearly marked "Not for publication" if you do not wish them to appear in print.

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PROGRAMMES FOR THE MONTH

THE ROYAL BALLET AT COVENT GARDEN

23rd Feb.	Thurs.	(eve)	<i>Les Deux Pigeons, La Fête Etrange</i>
28th "	Tues.	(eve)	<i>Les Deux Pigeons, Veneziana</i>
2nd Mar.	Thurs.	(eve)	<i>Ondine</i> (Fonteyn, Somes)
4th "	Sat.	(mat)	<i>Coppelia</i> (Sibley, Usher)
6th "	Mon.	(eve)	<i>Le Lac Des Cygnes</i> (Beriosova, Macleary)
8th "	Wed.	(eve)	<i>La Fille Mal Gardée</i> (Nerina, Blair), <i>Les Patineurs</i>
10th "	Fri.	(eve)	<i>Ondine</i> (Fonteyn, Somes)
11th "	Sat.	(mat)	<i>La Fille Mal Gardée</i> (Nerina, Blair)
16th "	Thurs.	(eve)	<i>Ondine</i> (Fonteyn, Somes)
17th "	Fri.	(eve)	<i>La Fête Etrange, The Invitation, Veneziana</i>
18th "	Sat.	(mat)	<i>Les Deux Pigeons, Facade</i>
20th "	Mon.	(eve)	<i>Sleeping Beauty</i> (Nerina, Blair)
21st "	Tues.	(eve)	<i>Sleeping Beauty</i> (Fonteyn, Somes)
22nd "	Wed.	(eve)	<i>Sleeping Beauty</i> (Beriosova, Macleary)

BALLET RAMBERT ON TOUR

w/c 27th Feb.	Royalty Theatre, Chester
" 6th Mar.	Belgrade Theatre, Coventry
" 13th "	Grand Theatre, Hanley
" 20th "	H.M. Theatre, Carlisle.

FESTIVAL BALLET FOREIGN TOUR

21st-28th Feb.	La Fenice Theatre, Venice
2nd-8th Mar.	Opera House, Catania
10th-11th "	Carlo Felice, Genoa
Monte Carlo for the Easter Season	28th Mar.-4th April
6th-9th Apr.	Giuseppe Verdi Theatre, Trieste

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LONDON REVIEWS

by FERNAU HALL



THE ROYAL BALLET SEASON AT COVENT GARDEN

THERE was no difficulty in foreseeing that Nadia Nerina would have a triumph in Russia: she has in very large measure a number of the characteristic virtues of Soviet ballerinas (such as a strong and supple back, high elevation and dynamic vigour) and yet her style is so much her own that these qualities carried an impact in Russia rather different from anything to which the Russians were accustomed. But no-one could say what would be the impact on her of her Russian appearances, and so her return to Covent Garden was a fascinating occasion.

Characteristically, she proved to have taken from the Russians just a few things which she judged valuable to her: this is something she has done right through her career, deciding in the most cool, balanced and intelligent way just what to absorb and what to reject. The most important and exciting change in her dancing is in her use of hands; now she uses them positively, in the Russian manner, to express each slight nuance of mood and to add accents to the phrasing. This new quality first emerged in the "dialogue" in Act II, in which she mimed the story of her past with delightful and novel intensity, giving full meaning to each gesture and joining them together in a nervous calligraphy expressing the tense state of mind of the Swan-Queen. But it emerged most clearly in a few wing-beating movements, in which the strong hand movements came as a climax to a wave of tension starting in the shoulders.

Another quality to emerge in Act II, more clearly than before, was a sense of great power held in check: Nerina has perhaps the strongest technique of any ballerina today, but she did not allow this to show except in subtle ways—e.g., in the power and height of her *développé* into a *penché* arabesque (in which her working leg became nearly vertical without breaking the style) and in some fast pirouettes supported by her partner's finger. The power was of course much clearer in Act III: here Nerina's precision was fantastic—above all in her variation, in which she managed a series of *relevés* leading into some *châtnés* at very high speed in which every tiny detail had the absolute perfection normally obtainable only in adage. The *changements* moving through second position were so dazzling they aroused a burst of applause in the middle of the dance—something rare in England. Her acting in Act III brought out some facets of the story with a new and individual clarity—notably the diversion she created upstage to distract Siegfried from the appearances of the real Swan-Queen.

This was a performance more likely to

impress dancers than the general public, for by temperament Nerina is less at home in high romanticism than in the 18th and 20th centuries. One day I hope to see her in a modern role created for her which gives full scope to all her qualities—including her own special kind of musicality.

ON 28th December Elizabeth Anderton danced the leading role in *Coppélia* at Covent Garden—her first appearance at the Garden in a role of this magnitude, and therefore a turning point in her career. She rose to the occasion with assurance and verve, showing not a vestige of nervousness and acting for all she was worth the whole time—even in the most difficult of the technical feats. In fact her acting was more impressive than her dancing, in which from time to time one might notice certain rough details, such as an occasional raising of the shoulders or a stiffness in a hand in a held position. Her interpretation of the role, though individual, was perfectly justified by the choreography and the story. She made Swanilda into a tomboy, very quick to react to events and easily elated or cast down, depending on what happened to her. Except in Act III the stress was on comedy, and she was seen at her best in the Spanish dance (which she made ludicrously and delightfully flamboyant) and in some tiny episodes in which she took off Dr. Coppélius, showing a wild, grotesque sense of humour which some choreographer may well exploit to good advantage in the future. Her pure classical dancing in Act III was reasonably correct (and most creditably controlled, in spite of the extreme technical difficulty) but she gave the best expression of her artistic gifts when standing the classical tradition on its head.

Her only important weakness emerged in Act II, when she failed to fill out the phrases, racing ahead of the music. This was not entirely her fault: Ralph Mace, in charge of the orchestra, produced some hurried tempi and showed little sympathy for the problems of the dancer in the ballerina role. (The basis on which conductors are selected for duty with the Royal Ballet remains as mysterious as ever.)

The most enduring impression made by Elizabeth Anderton was one of vivacity: whatever she was doing, she kept herself alive and fully aware of what was going on—above all what Franz was doing; in fact the interplay between her and Donald Britton was both varied and convincing. Curiously enough, at one point, when one would have expected Anderton's Swanilda to explode

with jealousy—when Franz danced with a rival—this Swanilda looked rather crushed: this unexpected reaction was fully convincing.

Basically the production was the same as that of the first company, but in a number of small details it showed the work of someone with good ideas. Dr. Coppélius, for example, made hypnotic passes at Franz and then hit him smartly over the head with the wine jug when the knock-out drops failed to work quickly enough: Henry Legerton was good in this role, making Dr. Coppélius less grotesque and more pathetic than most dancers.

The corps de ballet dancers went for their parts with commendable zest, but some faults in production made all their efforts go for nothing in the character dances of Act I. What was wrong was the rhythm; the Mazurka, for example, was danced with an even one-two-three rhythm, almost as if it were a ländler, whereas in fact they should have used a powerful rhythmic hiccup; two, three-AND-one. And they took all the zest out of the Hungarian dance in much the same way. In fact it is high time some real expertise was applied to the staging of all the character dancing at the Garden.

THREE days later Doreen Wells gave a very different interpretation to the role of Swanilda. Whereas the exuberant Elizabeth Anderton is an obvious choice for such a demi-caractère role, Doreen Wells is demure, tender and restrained: it is probably good for her to be cast against type in roles like Pineapple Poll and Swanilda—for in fact she makes a good job of them, and they help her to learn to project—but I hope that she will later be able to tackle roles which give opportunity to her own very special qualities.

These special qualities emerged very clearly in the pas de deux with the ear of corn in Act I. This Doreen Wells built up into a ballet in miniature, running through a gamut of feelings: annoyance, re-assurance, worry, determination, exasperation and finally despair. I have never seen anyone else treat the pas de deux in this subtle and complex way, and Doreen Wells' success here—in combination with her very assured and relaxed technique—augurs well for her future, if only she gets the parts (new or old) which really suit her.

In marked contrast to the corps de ballet dancers, she showed a keen feeling for the contrasting rhythms of her two character dances ("Spanish" and "Scottish") in Act II. Here she threw away all demureness and applied herself to the steps with the right kind of disciplined abandon.

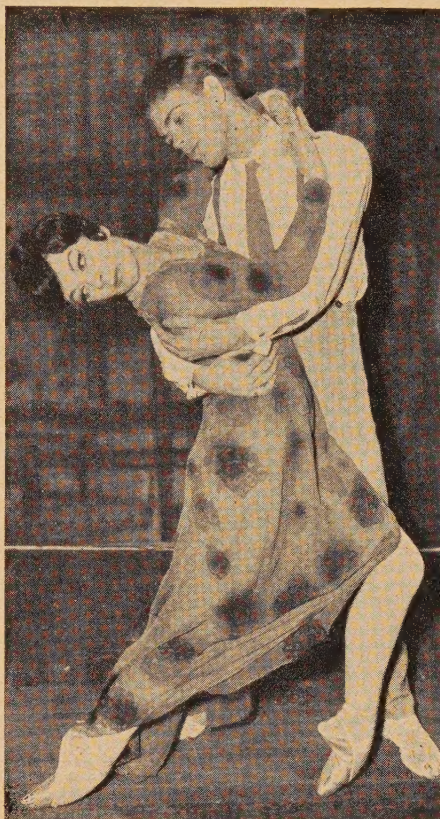
The Invitation

THERE are two important things to say about *The Invitation*, first shown at Covent Garden on 30th December. One is that this ballet demands to be taken seriously; Macmillan seems quite definitely to have renounced the clever-clever gimmicky style of his earlier years, and in *The Invitation* has produced a dramatic ballet tackling a serious theme of contemporary relevance—the initiation into sex of two adolescents. For the first time he has attempted to link up with the tradition established by Tudor, the supreme exponent of dramatic ballets with psychological complexity.

The second important thing to be said about *The Invitation* is that Macmillan has failed to give a satisfactory treatment to his chosen theme because of fundamental mistakes in planning—much the same sort of mistakes that Cranko made in planning *Antigone*. Like Cranko, he has crippled himself by combining stories from more than one source, arriving at a cumbersome plot which is unsuited either to his theme or to his range of choreographic expression. Not content with Colette's fine story *Ripening Seed* he has brought in material from a novel, *House of the Angel*, by a South American author, thus achieving a rather phoney symmetry (with an older couple seducing a younger couple), and he has padded the ballet enormously with dull and meaningless additions such as a divertissement by acrobats and entertainers—thus introducing elements typical of the work of John Cranko and Andrée Howard which are quite false to the classical, tragic Tudor tradition. *The Invitation* in fact lasts nearly an hour, when its ideal length would be half an hour or less.

Perhaps the most baffling thing about *The Invitation* is Macmillan's decision to set it in the Edwardian period—that of *Jardin aux Lilas* and *Pillar of Fire*—when (unlike Tudor) he clearly has no interest in, or understanding of, the real social conflicts of the day and the outlook that conditioned them. Conceivably Macmillan might have staged a convincing ballet showing the adolescents of today stumbling into an experience of sex; as it is, he stages a most contrived and unreal scene in which adolescents (belonging to no period or place) uncover and stare at nude statues which have previously (quite farcically and unconvincingly) been covered up.

Exactly the same uncertainty of style and period is to be found in the other elements of the ballet. Let us look first at the music, by the late Matyas Seiber. This fluctuates in the most blatant manner between styles belonging firmly to the nineteenth century (treated sometimes parodistically, sometimes "straight") and styles of more recent composers as different as Bartok, Constant Lambert, William Walton and Vaughan Williams—with occasionally some Schönbergian clichés for good measure. Such changes of style make it impossible to take the ballet seriously; at one point—where Matyas Seiber provides a tango as a basis for a very serious pas de deux—the conflict between stage and orchestra pit is quite intolerable. Seiber had a considerable reputation as a teacher of composition, and his previous works have been seriously intended compositions in contemporary



At a house-party early in this century two young adolescents, on the brink of tender love, are seduced by an older, unhappily married couple.

Above: Anne Heaton as the older woman, Christopher Gable as the young man. A photograph of Lynn Seymour as The Girl and Desmond Doyle as The Husband appears on page 2.

style: it is hard to understand why he should think that in writing for ballet he should abandon all considerations of taste and consistency.

On the other hand there was every reason to expect from Nicholas Georgiadis a number of gimmicky sets, quite lacking in any suggestion of period, and giving only the vaguest suggestion of place. The setting for Scene I is in fact quite typical of this designer. Scattered about the dancing area are some completely naturalistic statues; on the other hand most of the backcloth is totally non-figurative—taking the form of swirls of paint, flung on in the Jackson Pollock manner—but low on the backcloth there are flat, somewhat Cubist shapes suggestive of more statues. The other settings show a similar mixture of incompatible styles, and are equally vague in their suggestion of period and place. As for the costumes, most of these are exaggeratedly Edwardian in cut and material; one even sees women with pointe shoes emerging quite incongruously from beneath trains. But *The Wife* wears a dress which comes down

only to mid-calf and is slit up to the top of the thigh to provide free movement; this adaptation of Edwardian dress would be quite acceptable if all the women's costumes used the same convention: on its own, however, it looks extremely odd. One can understand Macmillan entrusting his "gimmick" ballets to Georgiadis, but he is very wrong to use this designer for all his ballets.

Though a number of the stage patterns clearly evoke *Jardin aux Lilas*, Macmillan's choreography in general shows no understanding of the nature of Tudor's expressive dance-images. In so far as there is any expression of feelings, this is done by rather wooden mime; and there is so much padding that almost no build-up of tension takes place. One scene, however, comes off theatrically: this is the seduction of The Girl by The Husband, staged by Macmillan with unexpected concision and showing his exceptional flair for unusual lifts. This is the climax of the ballet. But if the theme is to find its proper expression—and the ballet to rise above the level of a sensational "X" film—it is essential that we should then see the impact of this event on The Girl, expressed in a solo full of expressive dance-images. But there is no solo; The Girl simply stands or walks about. It is symptomatic of Macmillan's approach to his theme that whereas elsewhere he spreads himself wantonly, here he fails to respond to a crucial challenge to his powers of choreographic expression.

Of the solo performances, that of Anne Heaton as The Woman is outstanding. By every tiny detail of movement she suggests a woman of the world—blasé, embittered, but still capable of responding eagerly and passionately to the youthful charm and handsome profile of Her Cousin (elegantly danced, and acted with intelligence and touching seriousness, by Christopher Gable—a Colette hero to the life). Lynn Seymour looks perfect as the fourteen-year-old heroine: her face has an appropriate round innocence, and her movements are suitably ingenuous and uncertain, though rather lacking in variety. Only Desmond Doyle is miscast: he makes The Husband a two-dimensional villain of melodrama, rather than the more ambiguous character which the choreographer presumably had in mind. (Unfortunately the story printed in the programme is both curt and vague.)

Kenneth Macmillan proved by his production of *Le Baiser de la Fée* that when he is provided with a good story and suitable music he can tackle choreographic problems in a really professional way. But he has not yet learned how to plan a dramatic ballet so as to produce a convincing story which gives opportunities to his special talents, and his naiveté in dealing with collaborators shows him quite at sea in the major artistic trends of this century. Though he has had the good sense (following the lead given by Norman Dixon and Norman Morrice) to attempt to come to grips with the work of Tudor, his approach to Tudor is astonishingly superficial. One moral, at least, is obvious: the Royal Ballet should cease to ignore the work of Tudor, and take some of his ballets into its repertoire—established masterpieces like *Pillar of Fire*, and new works as well.

Festival Ballet Season

ON Boxing Day a reorganised Festival Ballet made its bow to the London public at the Festival Hall—without its erstwhile principal male dancer (John Gilpin) and its artistic director (Anton Dolin), and with a large number of new faces in the corps de ballet. The standard achieved, only a few weeks after the reorganisation, was quite creditable, and augurs well for the future.

The average standard of dancing of the corps de ballet was higher than before, and there was a marked decline in the "eyes and teeth" manner of presentation, more appropriate to the variety stage than to classical ballet, that at times disfigured the dancing of the old corps de ballet; in fact what stood out in the new girls was their simplicity and sincerity.

The Nutcracker has a rather dull story, offering few opportunities for characterisation or effective dancing. But the Prologue of the current production contains two mimed performances so good that when these characters are in action they dominate the stage and make the story come to life. One is Dr. Drosselmeyer, acted by Vassili Trunoff with fine precision and wit; he makes Drosselmeyer somewhat sinister, giving him nervous hand movements and a jerky walk, and at the same time equips him with a rather seedy bonhomie; in fact this Russo-Australian dancer shows an excellent understanding of the fantasy world of E. T. A. Hoffman, one of whose tales provided the basis for the ballet. As for Deirdre O'Conaire, acting the role of the lady of the house, she gives a performance in the great Russian tradition, imbuing every tiny detail of every movement and facial expression with the right dignity, grace, charm and warmth as well as her own very individual brand of radiance. With more of these two, more of Clara (well acted by tiny Mary Williams on the 27th), less of the repetitive squabbles of the children, and a completely revised version of the doll dances—here the choreographer (Lichine) shows a desperate lack of invention—the Prologue would be far more effective.



The most impressive item in Act I (The Land of Snow) is the transformation scene; Alexandre Benois (still a master of theatre-craft in his eighties) copes successfully with the problems presented by the awkward concert-hall stage, lacking nearly all the machinery one takes for granted in the theatre. His designs are clearly intended to please children, giving them the bold clear colours they enjoy and use in their own paintings.

But a mistake is made in catering to child taste to the extent of making the snow-storm so long and heavy that the nylon snow-flakes cover the stage, and make dangerous any of the more advanced aspects of dancing; corps de ballet danseuses wearing flat shoes can hardly suggest the magical quality of these crystals, and are quite out of tune with the music.

Act II of this production varies a good deal in quality of dancing and choreography. Four of the items—*Danse Arabe*, *Danse Chinoise*, *Danse des Mirlitons* and *Madame Regnier*—are depressingly lacking in any reflection of the subtle wit of Tchaikovsky's music. But the Trepak is put together reasonably well, and well danced by a trio of men, boisterously led by Vassilie Trunoff.

As for the grand pas de deux of the Sugar Plum Fairy and the Prince, this is one of the most beautiful things ever choreographed by Ivanov (who was understandably depressed by the story of *The Nutcracker*, and poured all his art into this dance-suite); fortunately Lichine has had the good sense to leave this classic of choreography untouched, and it stands out from the rest of the ballet as if it were something from a different world: as in fact it is.

On 27th December we saw Dianne Richards, facing the London public (not to mention the press) for the first time in the challenging ballerina role of the Sugar-Plum Fairy. She deserved this chance, for she has been developing fast in recent years, and in fact looked very attractive in her silver wig. Her line is good, and her personality is potentially charming, but on the 27th she showed in extreme form the nervousness which has prevented her from doing justice to her talent ever since she began to receive solo roles. This nervousness revealed itself partly in her habit of rapidly opening and closing her mouth, almost the whole time, and (even more seriously) in her failure to join up the steps into meaningful phrases; she danced each step as well as she possibly could, but did not seem to be able to look ahead more than a few seconds, so that the dance lapsed into a series of fragments. Her talent is unmistakable, and she has no technical reason to be nervous; her problem now is to immerse herself in the choreography so completely that (after she has made contact with the audience) it dances her, instead of her dancing it—she becomes the channel for something much bigger than herself; if this is not possible to her she must work so hard at her present mannerisms and faults of phrasing that they do not appear even when she is terrified.

She was very fortunate in having Oleg Briansky as her partner. This Belgo-Russian dancer looked the perfect fairy-tale prince: tall, handsome, relaxed, and noble in bearing. He was admirably attentive to the Sugar-Plum Fairy at all times, delighting in her and projecting his delight out to the audience;



Oleg Briansky and Dianne Richards.

Photo: Houston Rogers

what is more, his partnering was technically excellent, giving the danseuse the exact degree of support she needed at each moment. This tall dancer is not at his best in feats of virtuosity, but he was perfectly cast in this role; even when called on to turn pirouettes in snow-flakes in Act I, he showed the same easy, unhurried grace.

The corps de ballet was seen to good advantage in the *Valse des Fleurs*; a group dancing a miniature pas de quatre did particularly well, and Gaye Fulton was (as usual) outstanding; this fine artist showed remarkable gifts while still a student, when she won a prize at an R.A.D. competition, and it is high time she received roles in harmony with her talents.

ON 5th January the role of the Sugar-Plum Fairy was danced by Zsuzsa Kun, prima ballerina of the Budapest State Opera. This dancer proved (rather surprisingly) to be intensely Viennese—more characteristically Viennese than any ballerina I have seen at the Vienna State Opera. In looks she seemed a cross between Schwarzkopf and Bergner, and her smiles were full of *Gemütlichkeit*—the easy-going, friendly charm native to Vienna. On the other hand her style of dancing showed the impress of the Bolshoi very clearly, having plenty of breadth and panache. She was seen at her best in the opening pas de deux, to which she gave an interesting combination of grandeur and charm; presumably this was the Bolshoi version (for it broke away from the Ivanov original in a number of ways), but it retained much of the mood of the original—and even a very spectacular leap (ending in a kneeling position on her partner's shoulder) was done so easily that it did not break the mood. She did make the *Gemütlichkeit* rather too saccharine at times, but this made her performance all that more authentically Viennese.

On the other hand her variation was all wrong; here the choreography broke away from Ivanov, and its brash, spectacular vulgarity was quite false to Tchaikovsky's tender delicate music. Zsuzsa Kun got through the fireworks efficiently, but they did not suit her at all. FERNAU HALL

Rehearsal picture of Zsuzsa Kun and Mary Williams. Photo: Ian James

Paula Hinton



As the Street Dancer in *Le Beau Danube*
Photo: Houston Rogers

PAULA HINTON

Ballet Rambert

Guest Star 1950 London : Paris

London's Festival Ballet

Guest Star 1950 London : Monte Carlo

Ballet des Champs-Élysées

Guest Star 1951 Paris

Ballet Russe de Monte Carlo

Guest Star 1951 London

National Ballet of Australia

Guest Star 1952 Melbourne : Sydney

Walter Gore Ballet

Prima Ballerina 1953-54 London

Bal de X

Guest Star Palais de Chaillot Paris 1953

Australian Theatre Ballet

Prima Ballerina 1954-55 Melbourne : Adelaide

Het Nederlands Ballet

Guest Star 1956 Den Haag, Holland Festival

Nederlandsche Opera Ballet

Guest Star 1956 Amsterdam

Ballet der Lage Landen

Guest Star 1956-57 Amsterdam: Den Haag: Rotterdam

Ballets Jean Babilée

Guest Star 1956 Tournee France and Switzerland

Städtische Bühnen Ballet

Prima Ballerina 1957-58-59 Frankfurt-Main

Ballet Pilar Lopez

Guest Star 1958 Barcelona

Edinburgh International Ballet

Guest Star 1958 Edinburgh Festival : Zurich

American Festival Ballet

Guest Star 1960 Salzburg : Vienna

Het Amsterdams Ballet

Guest Star 1960 Amsterdam : Den Haag : Rotterdam

B.B.C. and French and Monaco Television

ALTHOUGH the day of the baby ballerina is over there still remains, in the year 1961, a rooted conviction in the heads of most people—and particularly fond mothers—that unless a child begins ballet at three, it is hopeless to consider a dancing career. It is something of a shock, therefore, albeit a pleasant one, to hear that England's finest dramatic ballerina did not begin serious ballet training until she was sixteen years old.

Paula's stage debut, however, had occurred some eleven years previously, when her father and mother appeared as Goro and Mrs. Pinkerton respectively in *Madame Butterfly*. Paula was the baby! Readers familiar with the opera will remember that Butterfly gives her child two names: the first is "Trouble", to be changed to "Joy" if and when the father returns to claim mother and baby. It is, of course, fanciful to imagine that this early début could have had any effect on the child who was to grow into England's most expressive dance-actress, yet it is a pleasing fancy, since Paula today is at her most inspired when expressing the lightning changes between joy and despair of such a character as Alexa in *The Night and Silence*. However, what doubtless had a tangible effect on the child was the fact that both her parents were on the stage, and that father particularly enjoyed roles which gave him scope for creating character such as Angelotti, Dancairo, Bruno—all roles in which the singer must do more than merely stand on the stage and make a beautiful sound. Paula cannot remember a time when she was not on tour with the family, and of course she wanted to sing too, but having no talent in that direction she soon came to prefer dancing and indeed this occurred so early that she cannot place the event accurately in her childhood years. What she does remember, however, is seeing Pavlova in her last season, and, young as she was at the time, this performance compelled her to consider ballet, and only ballet, as her future career. Owing, however, to the touring life of the family, it was not until she was sixteen that she was able to begin serious training, which she began in Liverpool with Hilda Delamere Wright. Her first job came when Andrée Howard cast her as Helen of Troy in *Doctor Faustus* at the Liverpool Playhouse, and Howard sent her to Rambert who immediately took her into the company where she made her début in the summer of 1944 in the corps de ballet of *Les Sylphides*. Incidentally, it is amusing to hear that Paula has only done two auditions in her life—for Howard and Rambert, both at the very beginning of her career.

It is a valid possibility that Paula Hinton owes her tremendous versatility and range of expression partly to the fact that she did not live the enclosed, dedicated life of a conventional ballet school in her formative years, but instead had to adapt herself to the ups and downs of a touring existence. True, her ventures into what is called the "classical" have so far been limited to *Giselle* (and she has danced Odette); but what does this mean in effect? It means that two or three ballets out of the entire repertoire perhaps have not appealed to her. Apart from the full-length Tchaikovsky ballets, in fact, she can perform anything going, and perform it as well if not better

than practically any other British ballerina. Besides her roles in Gore ballets (twenty-four to date) she has danced works by practically every other twentieth-century choreographer of European importance: Ashton, Babilée, Dolin, Fokine, Howard, Lichine, Lifar, Massine, Petit, Staff, Tudor and de Valois. Her favourite, apart from the Gore ballets of which her choice is *The Night and Silence* and *Die im Schatten leben*, is *Les Sylphides*. She has no regrets for roles which have not yet come her way and prefers to do new works; and in this she has been lucky in her career, for out of a total of over fifty roles danced, twenty-two were made for her. Can any contemporary ballerina save Fonteyn say the same?

Paula Hinton is unique today in British ballet in that not only can she both dance and act superbly, but she can dance her acting and act her dancing. Movement and characterisation are inextricably interwoven: the physical technique of ballet is used to express the mental reactions of the character she is portraying, the dramatic tensions of the situation subtly alter and modify the line and the attack of her movements. There are and have been good ballet actresses who could, by the force of their acting, make you overlook the fact that they were falling off their points. Paula does not have to make you forget, because she doesn't fall off. Her technique is so sure and easy and controlled that, like all the finest "classical" ballerinas, she can throw it away and concentrate on the expression. This combination presents a spectacle not often seen in British or any other ballet save the Bolshoi.

Technique Paula owes to a variety of teachers, among whom she singles out Volinine, Idzikowski, Crofton and, most particularly, de Vos whom she feels had a great influence on her dancing. So far as inspiration from the work of others is concerned, and apart from her childish glimpse of Pavlova, she feels that she was most influenced in her more impressionable years by the work of Sally Gilmour. Recently, of course, her inspiration has come from her husband Walter Gore, who has made a remarkable series of dramatic ballets for her: indeed, she went to Australia with Ballet Rambert a corps de ballet girl, and came back a star in his *Winter Night* (1948). When working on a new role, she does her best to eliminate her own personality and feel and think in accordance with the personality given to the character by the choreographer—although this does not prevent her pointing out anything which she feels to be dramatically uncomfortable or inconsistent. Then adjustments can be made, or not, according to the choreographer's reaction.

It is not easy to analyse or describe Paula Hinton as a dancer and a stage personality. For one thing, she is not a dancer of pose but a dancer of movement; she is quicksilver, not an elegant statue. She is beautifully compact physically—compact as Fonteyn, Alonso and Nerina are compact, with no straggling lines anywhere, and with the beautiful upward lift and thrust of the body in jumps so characteristic of the Bolshoi dancers. Apparently insubstantial, a wisp of thistledown, yet she can flash and dart and dazzle like some exotic



with Job Leerink in Walter Gore's ballet *Schemering* produced last year for the Amsterdam Ballet.
Photo: Jan Dalman.



Paula Hinton (centre) in the waltz in *LES SYLPHIDES*

GINEVRA with the Netherlands Ballet

Photo: Particam



tropical bird, for the extreme fineness and lightness of her limbs, head and body conceal a whipcord strength. Not classically beautiful, she has immense glamour and can convey beauty effortlessly through her expression or a sideways glance from her large, expressive eyes. Possibly it is the neatness of her proportions which helps give her the stamina to perform the exhausting roles which her husband has given her.

It is sad for London audiences that one of the finest dancers England has ever produced should have had to make so much of her recent career outside this country, for her performance in such ballets as *De Eenzame* and *Ginevra* put Paula Hinton in a class of her own. It is shameful that Gore's finest ballet and her finest role should never have been seen in London. It is hard to understand why such a dancer is not eagerly snapped up by those in charge of the Royal Ballet. We have a dozen adolescents who can make some sort of an attempt at the three-acters: but where are the dance-actresses who could inspire choreographers to produce living works, as Lloyd and van Praagh inspired Tudor, not merely copies of the Petipa/Balanchine school? At the present time, the Gores would like to work with a small company of their own, using eight or ten top soloists, but if this proves impracticable they will go abroad again. And in this case once again Paula Hinton will be lost to English audiences. And Paula is English: not South African, Lithuanian, Canadian or Australian.

... ROLES DANCED ...

ASHTON

Markova role in *Les Masques*
and *Mephisto Valse*
Lopokova roles in *Facade*

BABILÉE

Elle in *Balance à Trois*

CORALLI

Giselle and Queen of Wilis in *Giselle*

DOLIN

Grisi and Grahn in *Pas de Quatre*

FOKINE

Waltz, Mazurka, Pas de Deux, Nocturne in
Les Sylphides
Polovtsian Girl in *Prince Igor*
The Cockrel in *Coeq d'Or*

GORE

*Antonia in *Antonia*
*Alexa in *Night and Silence*
Clorinda in *Tancredi and Clorinda**
*Girl in *Peepshow*
*Principal role in *Cyclasm*
*The Go-getter's Fancy in *Light Fantastic*
*The Bride in *The Gentle Poltergeist*
*The Woman in *La Damnée*
Hysteries in *Concerto Burlesco*
Principal role in *Plaisance*
*The Wife in *Die im Schatten leben*
Principal role in *Simple Symphony*
*Principal role in *Kaleidoscope*
*The White Girl in *Winter Night*
*Principal role in *Theme and Variations*
*Grand Pas de Trois *Classique*
*Martine in *La Souffrance de Martine* (Soft Sorrow)
*Mrs. Caldicott in *Musical Chairs*
*Ginevra in *Ginevra*
*Title role in *De Eenzame* (Lonely One)
*The Wife in *Garten der Tränen* (Garden of Tears)
*Title role in *Das Magische Wesen*
*Grand Pas de Deux (Rusalka)
*The Daughter in *Schemering* (Twilight)

HOWARD

The Maiden in *Death and the Maiden*
The Younger Sister in *The Fugitive*
Mrs. Tebrich in *Lady into Fox*

HOLMES

*Jumbly Girl in *Dong with the Luminous Nose*

LICHINE

*First Movement in *Symphonic Impressions*
Riabouchinska role in *Graduation Ball*

LIFAR

Juliet in *Romeo et Juliet*

MASSINE

Street Dancer in *Le Beau Danube*

COCTEAU-PETIT

La Mort in *Le Jeune Homme et la Mort*

PETIPA

Odette in *Lac des Cygnes*

STAFF

Peter, Duck, Cat in *Peter and the Wolf*

TUDOR

Hebe in *Descent of Hebe*
Juno in *Judgment of Paris*
Mars in *The Planets*
Caroline and the Other Woman in *Jardin aux Lilas*
Italian, French Ballerinas in *Gala Performance*
First Solo, Pas de Deux in *Dark Elegies*

DE VALOIS

Markova role in *Bar aux Folies Bergère*

* Role or ballet created specially for Miss Hinton.

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the dancing world



MALTA

Ballet Rambert rehearse in the 228-year-old Manoel Theatre in Valetta for their opening on the 27th December

The interior of the beautiful theatre was damaged during the war but has now been restored at a cost of £130,000. It seats 640 and consists mainly of boxes; every box has a panel on the front, each painted by a different artist. The re-opening ceremony was marked by the Band of the Royal Malta

Artillery playing outside the theatre. Inside, trumpeters were placed on every floor for the opening fanfare. On the opening night the Company gave a performance of *Coppelia*; the rest of the week's programme included *Giselle* and *Czernyana*. Every seat for the five performances was sold out long before

opening night. Most of the island's notables were present, including the Governor and his wife, Sir Guy and Lady Grantham and the C. in C. Mediterranean Fleet, Admiral Sir Alexander Bingley. After the performance a reception was given by the British Council for 400 guests.

During the stay Rambert's

principal ballerina Lucette Aldous and Associate Director David Ellis and his wife lunched with the Governor and Lady Grantham. Members of the Company were invited aboard the Ark Royal by the Navy and toured Malta as guests of the Malta Tourist Board.

THE DANCING WORLD

an international feature
reporting world news in reviews
and pictures

OUR CRITICS:

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Moscow ...	Nina Karasyova
Amsterdam ...	Ine Rietstap
Venice ...	Robert Paterson
Auckland ...	Keith Woods
Tokyo ...	C. A. Eland
San Francisco ...	Jack Anderson
Brisbane ...	Paul Moulds
Cape Town ...	Marina Grut
Monte Carlo ...	J. R. Farrington
Munich ...	Ingeborg Zurner
Johannesburg ...	Mary Kenwood
Belgrade ...	Milica Zajcev-Daric
Hamburg ...	Robin Hamilton-Webb
Chicago ...	Ann Barzel

Cairo

THE famous Opera House in Cairo, built specially for the first performance of *Aida* in 1871, has been filled these last two months (November, December) by audiences who have come to see the Reda Troupe. There is a rumour that a modern Opera House will be built and that this gem of nineteenth-century Italian architecture may be pulled down; this would be a great pity for the acoustics are perfect and the period style of the auditorium, with three tiers of boxes in a horseshoe round the stalls, is delightful.

Professor Hassan Fahmy describes himself as the "father" of the Reda Troupe and he is in more ways than one, for besides casting a paternal eye over the dancers, his daughter Farida Fahmy is the principal danseuse, and his son-in-law Mahmoud Reda is the director, choreographer and chief danseur. His other daughter, Nadeeda, designed the costumes, but she died a few months ago. Professor Fahmy explained to me that until the troupe was founded in August 1959 the profession of dancer was despised. "Male dancers were considered effeminate and women dancers vulgar," he told me. "Our task has been to convince the public that dancing is an art which people of good family can take up without shame. My family and friends were shocked when they learnt that I was going to allow my daughter to dance on the stage. I must confess that I was shocked when my daughter, Nadeeda, said she wanted to marry Mahmoud, but they convinced me, and now we have been convincing the public, that dancing is an art."

Mahmoud Fahmy has the seriousness and enthusiasm of dedication. When a student he thought far more about dancing than his studies; and when appearing in cabaret in Paris he spent the day-time having lessons in ballet and choreography. He realised before he started his troupe that it would be a mistake, in a country where there is little dancing tradition, to imitate western-ballet, and so he decided that his dancers would concentrate on producing dances that derived directly from the folklore and familiar



THE MAHMOUD REDA TROUPE

incidents in the lives of ordinary people in the town and country.

The programme consisted of two types of dances: those depicting homely, amusing incidents, such as a street vendor flirting with a girl; and more ambitious short ballets based on a legend or simple story.

The music for the ballets is based on Egyptian folk songs and is arranged by Ali Ismael who also conducts the orchestra. The orchestra of eight violins (adjusted for Arab music), a cello, an Egyptian harp and various kinds of tambourine-like hand-drums produces a sound that although eastern in tone and cadence is not at all difficult for the western ear. The tunes have a captivating lilt and a rhythm that makes the listener want to tap his feet. The music and the singers in the orchestra pit help the dancing enormously.

The steps of the dances are agile and simple, and closer to those of modern dance than to those of classical ballet. The women dance in flats or bare feet, and the men in bare feet or shoes. The body-shaking contortions of the belly-dancer have been modified and turned into something graceful and attractive. The hands are used a great deal for expression, especially in the dances on homely incidents.

The first part of the programme opened with *Fortune Telling*, a ballet in which girls welcome the arrival of a fortune-teller and

later the boys, Mahmoud Reda and Farida Fahmy, ended this ballet with a spirited *pas de deux*. The amusing numbers such as *Noon on a Hot Day* when two yokels with baskets over their heads bump into each other, and the *Vendor of Marionettes* when the marionettes disobey their master and a policeman who intervenes, are less successful, their humour being rather obvious, than the more serious numbers. *Ramadan Nights* ended the first half of the programme and was a charming ballet about a poor girl who, unlike the other children of the district, has no lamp to carry in the happy evenings of the month of day-time fasting. A man takes pity on her, gives her a lamp so that she can join the others in their merry dancing. Farida Fahmy danced the part of the poor girl; the grouping of the dancers and their quick exits and entrances showed them to be well directed and controlled.

Arab Horses gave the nine danseurs a chance to show their sense of timing and discipline; in tights for the only time in the evening, the "horses" pranced and marched effectively under the control of their master, Mahmoud Fahmy. The costumes in *Sugar Dolls* were more successful than the dance. For this number the girls were dressed in brightly coloured bell-shaped skirts with large, round discs in mauve and red, yellow and purple, and looked exactly like the sugar

Japan

The Royal Ballet visit is eagerly awaited and will spark off even greater interest in Western ballet. But if ballet is to continue to grow the Japanese must develop their own qualities and style. Below is an extract from the Asahi Evening News, which pinpoints their problems today.

IT SEEMS to me that the greatest single void in Japan today is ballet. One might accept this philosophically except that there is a large, keen public interested in ballet. The present situation is, however, enough to bring a tear to the eye and an oath to the lips.

The core of the present situation stems from two directions: a lack of taste in the choice of models, and the lack of conscious effort to use models only as models to build something new. All those countries which specialise in ballet—France, Denmark, England, Russia and the U.S. — have some special quality of their own.

This is the crux of Japan's ballet problem. Ballet, after all, is largely a physical art, and the Japanese face severe problems along these lines. Most Japanese are short. This is an asset for the women and a drawback for the men, and although the men are well proportioned, they lack the beefiness to cope with the demands of Western classical ballet. One can often see a male Japanese dancer attempting to catch 130 pounds or so of ballerina in mid-air, or just hold her there with everything a quiver. These valiant efforts are usually rewarded with giggling in the audience.

On the other hand, the Japanese have several advantages of their own. They have a natural grace, but admittedly they don't use it on the ballet stage. They seem to prefer a mawkish imitation of the Russians. One has only to watch the way a Japanese woman folds herself on to tatami, or the curvature of the hands when offering tea. These, and many other characteristic gestures, could be made to serve in ballet.

The other great asset of the Japanese is agility. They normally have tremendous reflex action, which is what helps make them tigers at table tennis. I remember hearing a frustrated tennis player in Karuizawa walk off the court muttering: "What can one do? They're like cats."

Speed of movement is somewhat suppressed in Western ballet, but there is no real reason why it should be. Why not make the most of it? There are

a number of places where sheer agility would be a great asset. Take the swordplay dances of the Kabuki for example. How much more effective these are than the average counterpart in Western ballet (as in Prokofiev's *Romeo and Juliet* score). Yet when the Japanese presented *Romeo* they seemed quite content to mime the Western style of doing it.

There are even a number of ballets whose production largely depends on stage reflex action. These have never really come off on European and American stages, but the Japanese have within them what it takes to bring out a successful production of, say, Debussy's *Jeux*. And since *Jeux* is about love on a tennis court, it seems rather singularly appropriate to Japanese audiences anyway.

Now back to my first point about models. Japanese ballet suffers from the equally bad influence of American television imports and Russian ballet companies. From American TV they adopted a basically anti-art tendency which, mixed with the archaic type scenery and decor of the Russians, has produced the mess we have today.

What Japanese ballet needs most desperately right now is someone with enough knowledge of Western ballet really to comprehend it, and enough courage to change it. He will have to appraise the possibilities, not from the stage, but perhaps best from the athletic field. He must decide what the Japanese body can do best, and what it cannot do at all. He must then translate this knowledge into the science of motion, so as to cultivate the former and suppress the latter. It will only be from such a study that a real Japanese ballet style will evolve . . . a style that the Japanese dancer can live with.

IN SUMMARY: Japanese physical ability tends toward agility rather than sheer muscular prowess, and failure to come to grips with this largely accounts for the backwardness of local ballet. What is needed is a messiah in tights to reform classical ballet to physical necessity.

HEUWELL TIRCUIT

REPORT FROM TOKYO by CYRIL ELAND

THE International Dance Institute was launched in Tokyo at a reception given in the recently completed premises in early August. Mr. Yasaburo Shimonaka, President of the Hei Bonsha Publishing Company, has constructed at his own expense a very fine

FARIDA FAHMY IN RAMADAN NIGHTS

dolls children are given on the Prophet's birthday. The girls' finger-cymbals gave spirit to this rather static dance.

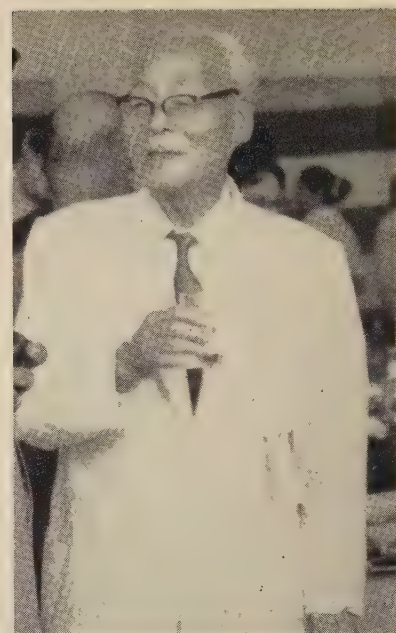
Farida Fahmy and Mahmoud Reda were at their best in *Mermaid of the Nile*, the story of the gullible fisherman who is enticed into the depths by the irresistible enchantress. And the whole company captured excellently the humour and simplicity of village life in the final number *The Magic Nai* (reed-flute). Rateeba (Farida Fahmy) is in love with Owaiss, but her father is against marriage. Owaiss meets Rateeba whenever he can but is chased away by her father; finally Owaiss by playing his flute is able to win over Rateeba's father. Mahmoud Reda acted the character of the disapproving father very well, his "imchi" (go away) and his brandishing of his stick, repeated several times to the same catchy musical rhythm, were extremely amusing.

Mahmoud Reda has avoided sophistication and in this lies the strength of the troupe. The music is folk and popular, the ballets are simple, and the costumes are more or less the same as those worn by villagers. So often when village dances are taken on to the stage or into the drawing-room they lose their meaning. This is not the case with the Mahmoud Reda Troupe because they have succeeded in reproducing the natural verve, humour and charm of the people.

JOHN HAYLOCK



At the inaugural reception in the International Dance Institute, Tokyo. Left to right: Mr. Keiji Obara, stage photographer, and leading ballet dancers: Miss Seiko Takata, Miss Midori Ishii, Mr. Nobayuki Tsuda and Mr. Masatoshi Shigyo.



Above: Mr. Yasaburo Shimonaka, Founder and Chairman of the Dance Institute.

Below: A model of the building.

building on high ground near the centre of Tokyo as a meeting place for all persons in Japan who are interested in various forms of dance. Further, he intends that at the Institute there shall be opportunities for Japanese members to meet dancers, choreographers and teachers from other countries and to exchange with them ideas about the dance forms which are indigenous to their countries. Mr. Shimonaka visualises that visitors from abroad will make known in Japan their national dances and will in turn be able to learn about the very specialised art of dancing as practised in Japan. The western art of ballet will also play a large part in the work of the Institute: it is to be hoped that this will be the neutral ground on which local teachers and artists will put aside petty rivalries between their various companies and schools and that the organisation will come to play a part in the life of Japanese Western Ballet similar to that of the Camargo Society in London. The project is strictly non-commercial.

Mr. Shimonaka intends that the Institute shall gradually be expanded into an international centre of art and culture, not merely of dancing. He feels, however, that the art of dance is the simplest and most effective medium of cultural exchange. He tells how in November 1952 he and other delegates at the Conference of the World Federation of Asia held in Hiroshima were deeply impressed by a dance, *No More Hiroshima*, which was performed there by individuals who had actually experienced the fear of the atomic bomb. He hopes to make this particular dance known abroad as his contribution towards world peace. He has also been deeply impressed by the dance forms which he saw during his travels in India, China and various countries of Europe and Asia and regards the art of dance as the world's greatest common language.

The Dance Institute is a well equipped building of three floors with two basements. Externally it cannot be considered beautiful, being a simple, solid concrete, box-like structure built into the side of steep hill. The principal floor is entered by a ramp of steps: at the main door is an information desk and immediately beyond the large training hall, one wall of which is all window leading out on to a wide terrace commanding a fine view of the city of Tokyo. Round two sides of the hall is a practice bar. On the mezzanine floor (the hall rises to the height of two stories) are dressing rooms and an office. The second floor consists of a large Japanese reception room simply but charmingly decorated and other smaller Japanese rooms. On the top floor are two big and very pleasant flats to accommodate visiting artists which by the use of panel screens can be subdivided to accommodate in privacy four persons. In the basements are sound recording studios for both 35 mm and 16 mm prints, film editing rooms and smaller practice studios.

In order to establish the international nature of the Institute Mr. Shimonaka asked the diplomatic missions in Tokyo each to appoint a representative of their country to be a member of the organisation. Great Britain, the United States of America, France, India, Italy, Czechoslovakia, Mexico and the Soviet Union are among the countries which have responded to his request.

The only activity of the Institute since its opening has been to mount a course of training in "Movement on the Stage" conducted by Eleanor King, Professor of the Theatrical Division of the University of Arkansas, for the benefit of professional dancers and actors. Miss King, who is no stranger to Japan, spoke about this course at a press

conference attended by a number of leading Japanese dancers: the most important aspect of her course for the Japanese students would appear to lie in her encouragement and direction of improvisation in movement since every aspect of Japanese life, dancing included, is still very much governed by rigid formal rules and patterns of behaviour. Miss King was certainly not unaware of the difficulties which she was facing and she fortunately possesses the charm and sympathetic understanding which are essential qualities for any aspirant to teaching in Japan.

What next, however? A building and lofty sentiments of international understanding through the dance are not sufficient in themselves. To visit Tokyo from whatever country neighbouring, trans Pacific or trans continental, is not an inexpensive undertaking and if Mr. Shimonaka wishes visiting artists from abroad to occupy the guest rooms of his institute, to teach and exchange ideas, he will, I feel, have to encourage them by payment of passages and fees for their work. He has already, very laudably, undertaken to provide scholarships for promising Japanese dancers. No indication has yet been given of a regular programme of activities, meetings, discussions and lectures for members. A reading room and film library exists but we foreigners certainly look forward to the implementation of his idea of introducing us to the best of Japanese dance.





Munich

Oleg Briansky's ballet *Pièces Brillantes* with costumes and scenery by André Levasseur.
Photo: Rudolf Betz

THE most important event during recent months was the première of the new programme of ballets which took place at the State Opera on November 22. It consisted of two German premières, Antony Tudor's *Gala Performance* and *Pièces Brillantes* by Oleg Briansky, as well as the revival of Alan Carter's *The Miraculous Mandarin*.

Pièces Brillantes is an abstract ballet by Oleg Briansky to well-known music by Mikhail Glinka. The choreography, especially in the beginning reminiscent of Balanchine, is based entirely on conventional, classical technique and unfortunately at times shows a lack of invention, above all in the male variation. On the other hand it contains some beautifully fluent, even technically brilliant passages. As is the case with all neo-classical ballets of pure dancing, with no dramatic plot or strikingly new patterns of movement to hold one's attention, the effect of this ballet depends on its execution. Apparently the company is not yet ready for such technical ordeals as exist in Balanchine ballets or Lander's *Etudes*, yet nevertheless they danced with quite good precision and style. If they lacked technique (especially the men) and brilliance, these were compensated for by enthusiasm. Almost brilliant, however, was the dancing of Annaluise Schubert, who reminded one a little of Lupe Serrano in *Don Quixote*, as she did a pas de trois together with Margot Werner and

Hannes Winkler. Oleg Briansky took the male lead himself, but obviously had not recovered from a recent leg injury and consequently did not take risks in technical feats. However, in the pas de deux, the highlight of the ballet, he was a distinguished, noble partner for his ballerina Dulce Anaya, who went through her very quick variation with charm, attack and technical facility. The costumes by André Levasseur are so pretty that one is pleased to see them again. We met them recently with the American Ballet Theatre in *Themes and Variations*, and the seven ballerinas of *Birthday Offering* wear a knee-length variant of them.

Also very welcome was the revival of Alan Carter's masterpiece *The Miraculous Mandarin* (music by Bela Bartok), under the supervision of Joan Harris and Franz Baur. This eminently dramatic work has lost nothing of its impact over the years. Franz Baur and, above all, Heino Hallhuber were impressive villains, agile and full of brutal force, cruel in their greed for money and murder, only knowing one feeling—that of terror at the Mandarin who will not die. Paul Wunsch portrayed this role with more human warmth than he did six years ago, thus rendering more credible the transformation of the Girl from a heartless prostitute and mechanical decoy for the villains into a human being. Only a mature artist of such high dramatic powers as is Natasha Trofimova

can convince us in this role, which demands the utmost both physically and technically. In spite of all voluptuous cruelty and perversity she still arouses a feeling of pity with this girl's inner tragedy that becomes visible in every nuance. Will Spindler gave a memorable performance in one of the supporting roles as the foolish, old man. The scenery by Werner Schachteli was suggestive of the dark, oppressive atmosphere of the ballet. The programme ended with gay laughter at Antony Tudor's *Gala Performance*. To judge from the Rambert version I saw a few years ago, Tudor intended it as an ironical confrontation of the three great balletic styles as developed in Italy, France and Russia, with an occasional dig at those mannerisms and vanities common to dancers of all nationalities. In Munich the ballet has been turned into an exuberant parody of the various follies of ballet people. If one accepts this interpretation the execution was masterly. Natasha Trofimova was a stilted Russian Ballerina, overflowing with emotion and a "modesty" which made it awfully difficult for her to leave applause and the stage to her colleague, the Italian Ballerina (Margot Werner), who in turn radiated icy, majestic disdain. Dulce Anaya as the French Ballerina darted about the stage, regardless of art and technique, full of affectations (and in many a balletomane recent memories were thus evoked). Paul Wunsch and Hannes

Winkler had a difficult task both as partners to such "ballerinas," and to hold their own against the admirable performances, technically and mimically, of the three soloists. That they succeeded proves their high comic talents. The sparkling wit of this ballet was heightened by the imaginative, wonderfully daubed scenery and costumes by Max Bignens.

The successful evening was immensely enjoyed and applauded by a capacity audience. What a pity that the playing of the orchestra was so indifferent, neither brilliant, nor dramatic, nor witty.

The Roleff-King Ballet

On the 20th November the Roleff-King School of Ballet, now perhaps the foremost school of dancing in Munich, presented its senior pupils in a programme of five ballets of quite different character. At first we saw *Classical Variations*, a suite of ensembles and soli based on the academic vocabulary of movement. It was neatly executed and showed that the school lays stress on a sound technical foundation, which in the case of Antje Aarborg in the principal role is already showing signs of brilliance. The very young Peter Breuer danced a Mazurka, and though he is still lacking assurance, clearly showed promise.

In the Persian tale of *The White and the Black Dove*, to music by M. Moussorgsky, the talented Barbara Cortez took the leading role of the Princess. She has a sure technique and fine musicality and gave an intelligent interpretation of the role, indicating its oriental character in her plastic ports de bras. The two rival princes were danced with elegance by Martin Stühler and Karl-Heinz King. *Diana Sorpresa*, set to music by Harald Banter, left rather a weak impression this time. Though it again proved the precision of the corps de ballet, and revealed in Ina Priefert (Nymph Echo) a young dancer with an exceptionally elegant, long line, the work as a whole lacked dramatic intensity. Both Antje Aarborg (Diana) and Karl-Heinz King (Actaeon) possess a strong technique, but especially A. Aarborg is still completely lacking in dramatic expressiveness.

The highlight of the evening was *Til Eulenspiegel* (to the famous music by Richard Strauss). This ballet like none of the others shows Peter Roleff's power of invention, for not only was he responsible for all the choreography of the evening, but also for the scenery, the colourful costumes and the delightfully expressive masks. Karl-Heinz King was a charming Til, dancing with virtuosity through his various adventures, and also giving a convincing portrayal of the more serious side in the fool's character, when his love for the Girl (A. Aarborg) is rejected. *Valse Royale* set to music by Khatchaturian ended this successful evening. It is a great waltz with full corps de ballet and once again shows the good standard of the school which does not seek easy effects, but strives for good work.

An Evening of Ballet Organised by the Friends of the Ballet

On December 9, the association of the Friends of the Ballet organised a performance at which various Munich schools participated. Technical and artistic standards were widely differing, so widely indeed, that I shall leave out of consideration two schools which presented us with poorly trained little girls staggering about the stage in enormous point shoes. The children of the Suse Böhm Studio demonstrated their sound rhythmical training with parts of the Orff School Work. Though the choreography was too much restricted to mere gymnastics it was at least



Karl-Heinz King as Til Eulenspiegel, about to play a trick on the market women

Photo: Fröbe Görtz

perfectly within the grasp of children. Margarete Hasting's pupils showed modern dance etudes which were disappointingly monotonous in choreography and rhythmical outline, and the girls executing them looked cramped and unnatural.

The rest of the programme put the emphasis on classical ballet. Here again we had a disappointing part—the Godlevsky School of Ballet. Among their contributions were a pas de deux which was much too difficult for its executants, a rather tasteless affair called *Neo-classical*, and a scene with gipsy dances. The senior students of the State Opera

tested their talents at various items from the classical ballets. Obviously some of these young dancers are promising, above all Renate Deppisch. On the whole they have a strong technique, but from the waist upwards lack expressiveness, the ports de bras being especially stiff and poor. The Roleff-King Ballet ended the evening with *Valse Royale*, but for a great waltz with full corps de ballet the stage was too small, so that it lost its effect. From an artistic point of view Barbara Cortez was perhaps the most promising dancer of the evening.

INGEBORG ZÜRNER

SAN FRANCISCO

AT Christmas time, the San Francisco Ballet again presented its traditional holiday spectacles, *Nutcracker* and *Beauty and the Beast*. The company also gave suburban performances of one-act ballets.

Among them was *Variations de Ballet* (Glazounov), a new work for large ensemble in which the sections are alternately choreographed by George Balanchine and Lew Christensen. An extension of the style Balanchine earlier employed in *Pas de Dix*, it displays neither of its choreographers in top form.

Alan Howard, former premier danseur of Ballet Russe de Monte Carlo, has organized his own concert group, Pacific Ballet, with headquarters in San Francisco. Its opening performance was notable for two ballets by Marc Wilde, the best of which was *On the Beach*, the excellently constructed drama about romance at the seaside he created last season for the Bay Area Ballet.

Wilde's new *Variations for Fun* (Les Elgart) is the latest of several recent local attempts to combine ballet with jazz or popular music. Some dancers, idling about the stage, are led by the music to impersonate such things as puppets, bullfighters, and exponents of several dance styles. Although each of these episodes is neatly worked out, the ballet is vitiated by its trivial and rather stale basic concept.

Modern dancer Ann Halprin spends most of the year working quietly in her country studio. But on the rare occasions when she and her company perform in the city she invariably stimulates, irritates and enchants

her audiences. Her recent programme was no exception.

The whimsically titled *Birds of America; or, Gardens Without Walls* was an abstraction to music by John Gage and Lamonte Young. The dancers, whether arrested in a strange stillness or groping toward each other or walking as though through water between bamboo poles, evoked a feeling of vast expanses and gentle loneliness, moods intensified by interpolations of harmonica music and fragments of conversation.

The Flowerburger, utilizing poems by Richard Brautigan (a sort of San Francisco-style Lewis Carroll), permitted the dancers to improvise their movements within a basic framework. Despite hilarious moments, it was, as a whole, tedious. Miss Halprin allowed so much improvisation here that potentially humorous sequences were constantly side-tracked, rather than permitted to build to proper comic climaxes. Perhaps she had *comedia dell'arte* in mind when she devised this work. If so, she should have remembered that *comedia* improvisation was held together by an already existing plot constructed in surefire comic terms, something stronger and more unifying than a group of poems.

That Miss Halprin can be a fine comedienne in "set" choreography was demonstrated by *Mr. and Mrs. Mouse*, which is also based on a poem in this case, one by James Broughton in which the problems of mousy matrimony provide a lesson for all creatures.

JACK ANDERSON



After the première of *Le Lac Des Cygnes* at the Paris Opéra. Left to right: Josette Amiel, Mlle. Vera, Boccadora, Soviet choreographer Vladimir Bourmeister, M: A. M. Julien, Director of the Opéra, and Mme. Bourmeister (Antonia Kroupenina)

NEWS FROM PARIS

by FERDINAND REYNA

ON 21st December the Opéra gave the first performance of *Swan-Lake* in a four-act version by the Soviet maître de ballet W. Bourmeister, who came from Moscow to Paris a month earlier to stage this ballet. The threat of a strike by the musicians of the state theatres seemed likely to stop the show, but fortunately this did not happen.

Josette Amiel was the first to perform the role of Odette-Odile; she will be followed by Maria Tallchief, Claude Bessy and others. The role of Siegfried was taken by Peter van Dijk, and the wicked magician Rothbart by Max Bozzoni. There was a brilliant pas de quatre in Act I, danced by Claire Motte, Jacqueline Rayet, M. Atansasoff and Lucien Duthoit. Mlle. Rayet won a great deal of well-justified admiration because of the poetic and aerial quality of her dancing.

In the dance of the four cygnets in Act II, M. Bourmeister made use of four child students of the Opéra (Mlles. Lamou, Sevestre, Francillon and Querrez) who acquitted themselves very well. Also in this act, the grand sujets Mlles. Bassi, Oudart and Bourillot distinguished themselves in the role of three leading swans.

The version of *Swan-Lake* staged by M. Bourmeister at the Opéra differs a little from that staged by him for the Stanislavsky company and seen in Paris some years ago at the Chatelet; but it is basically the same—simple, even austere, but at the same time very beautiful.

In Act IV, the most successful of all the Acts, the machinery did not dominate the dancing. The movement of the swans in a long line was staged with classical dignity; in fact this was true of the whole production, which has great purity of line, and arouses profound emotions.

The magician Rothbart dies struck by thunder, without a fight. Josette Amiel proved herself a real star; she was outstanding in Act III, where she showed herself able to create the proper atmosphere of evil sorcery. She is very beautiful, and to this she adds a strong technique. Without giving very much expression to feeling she succeeds in moving us by her beauty, which gives a sense of classical royalty and which enforces our admiration, even if it cannot do more than this.

Peter van Dijk danced very well, though one cannot say more than this. Max Bozzoni created very well the role of the magician Rothbart. The settings designed by the painter Bouchène are adequate, but that for Act II is much too cold, with its chain of mountains evoking the Himalayas. These settings were not well received by the critics.

As for the dancers, from the lowest ranks of the corps de ballet to the stars, they showed that when well guided and subjected to intelligent discipline they can achieve what before was their principal deficiency—the sense of ballet as a collective work of art, fusing the identities of those taking part (something very difficult to achieve in this country).

The Sleeping Beauty of the Marquis de Cuevas continued to play to full houses at the Théâtre des Champs Elysées. Nina Vyroubova became one of the ballerinas dancing the title role, following the other stars of the company. She gave a strong performance without producing any surprises.

Vera Boccadora of the Opéra, who came back to Paris recently as assistant and advisor to the choreographer Bourmeister for the production of *Swan-Lake*, has had a strange

experience. Now 23, she was at the bottom of the corps de ballet of the Opéra four years ago. But she felt she was not advancing as rapidly as she deserved, and so she asked for leave of absence to work in Russia. She was granted six months leave. Then after returning to Paris she danced for several months at the Opéra, but asked for another leave of absence, for she had an offer of work in Moscow. Since this application for leave was refused, she resigned from the Opéra, returning to the Bolshoi Dance School. Here it was discovered that she had a talent for choreography, and in 1959 she entered the Choreography Section. In 1960 she created two ballets in Moscow, and then M. Bourmeister invited her to accompany him to Paris. During the staging of *Swan-Lake* she acted as interpreter, for she speaks Russian as fluently as French. (Her mother is a Russian refugee living in France.) Between rehearsals at the Opéra Mlle. Boccadora went to Moscow to attend the première of the film *Peace to Him Who Enters* in which she takes the part of a young French girl who is deported.

Two young danseuses tied for the René Blum prize awarded each year by the Society of Dance Critics and Dance Writers of Paris. One is Marie Yakimova, a seventeen-year-old French girl of Russian origin, pupil of Nina Tikanova, who danced in turn with Jean Babilée, with the Jeunesses Musicales and finally as the star of Lycette Darsonval's group at the Opéra. Her classical style has been noticed by connoisseurs and critics. The other prize winner is Régine Bury, a young Parisian girl who was seen in Roland Petit's company, replacing at short notice the soloist who took the role of Madame Ragueneau in the ballet *Cyrano de Bergerac*.

Canada

ROYAL WINNIPEG BALLET

AS reported in *Ballet Today* last month the Royal Winnipeg Ballet celebrated its 21st anniversary during the Christmas season in their home town. To mark the occasion a party was held prior to the opening performances, and our picture (right) shows dancers



Olga Moiseeva and Askold Makarov, who had a magnificent success in Winnipeg, are seen here in the *Don Quixote* pas de deux. Photo: Campbell and Chipman

greeting guests on the grand staircase of the Legislative Building. The giant anniversary cake can be seen in the background. The dancers, girls in white, boys in black, acted as hosts. The Christmas trees with their myriad lights, the scarlet clad Royal Canadian Mounted Police on guard, made a delightful and colourful scene which will be long remembered. Guests of honour at the party were Olga Moiseeva and Askold Makarov of the Leningrad Ballet, who had flown into Winnipeg to dance with the Company in four successive performances. Telegrams of congratulation arrived from many parts of the world including messages from Alicia Markova, Moira Shearer, Anton Dolin, Dame Adeline Genée, Paddy Stone and Vincent Massey. The Russian guest artists danced *Swan Lake* Act II and the Grand pas de deux from *Don Quixote*, and had a tremendous reception. All houses were completely sold out.

On 10th January the Company left for a three thousand mile tour of the United States. This summer will see the inauguration of another new project, a summer School, to be held between 27th June and 6th August. This has long been a dream of Mr. Arnold Spohr, the Company's director, and the school will be under his personal direction, assisted by Miss Gwynne Ashton, ballet mistress, who was responsible for the *Swan Lake* choreography used during the performances by the Russian guest artists. David Shields, principal dancer of the Royal Winnipeg Ballet, will also teach.



NATIONAL BALLET OF CANADA

FOUR new productions and a revival of *Giselle* are included in the extensive repertoire with which the National Ballet of Canada inaugurated its Tenth Anniversary Season, 24th October, in Hamilton, Ontario. The tour will continue through six Canadian provinces and 25 of the United States until mid-May.

On 26th December the company made its fourth visit to Western Canada, embracing six leading cities from Victoria, B.C., to Winnipeg, Manitoba. Then follows the longest engagement, in the company's headquarters, Toronto, from 30th January to 4th March. Starting 3rd April, a six-week tour of the eastern, southern and mid-western United States begins.

Don Gillies, Canadian-born choreographer who danced for a time with Britain's Royal Ballet, created *The Remarkable Rocket* based on an Oscar Wilde children's fable, with original music commissioned from Maurice Surdin, and decor by the noted Canadian painter, Jack Nichols. Since his return Mr. Gillies has devoted most of his attention to television ballet. Mr. Surdin is best known (this is his first ballet) for his background music for Canadian Broadcasting Corporation radio and T.V. dramas. Mr. Nicholas painted the settings and costume designs in tempera.

Grant Strate, a charter member of the company and personal assistant to artistic director Celia Franca, has made a radical change in pace with his zany *Antic Spring*, to



Lois Smith, prima ballerina of the Company, as Princess Aurora. Photo: Elizabeth C. Frey

music by the late Jacques Ibert and decor by Mark Negin, a young Englishman rapidly establishing an excellent reputation in this field in Canada. Mr. Strate's previous ballets have been dramatic.

Premier danseur David Adams has re-created a new version of *Barbara Allen*, based on the old English ballad. Original music was commissioned from the well-known Canadian Louis Applebaum, formerly musical director of the Stratford, Ont., Shakespearean Festival and composer for many Hollywood and National Film Board productions.

Miss Franca has produced a ballet *Princess Aurora*, made up of dancing highlights from *Sleeping Beauty*. Decor for both the last-named works is by Kay Ambrose, resident designer with the company.

The touring company, now numbering more than 80, with the orchestra under permanent musical director George Crum, is headed by prima ballerina Lois Smith, premier danseur David Adams, and principal soloists Angela Leigh, Earl Kraul, Jocelyn Terrell, Jacqueline Ivings, Sylvia Mason, Judie Colman, Don Mahler, David Scott, Kenneth Melville, Patrick Hurde, Colin Worth, Yves Cousineau, Hans Meister, Grant Strate.

A new production of *Giselle* is being mounted this season, with Lois Smith in the title role, and Miss Leigh and Miss Terrell alternating as Queen of the Wilis.

The company tours in two chartered buses with four or five 35-foot long tractor-trailer trucks for scenery, costumes and effects.

HAMBURG

HERE in Hamburg we were all glad to see Maria Fris dancing again. One of Germany's leading ballerinas, Miss Fris has had a most unfortunate series of foot injuries, the last of which indisposed her for six months. Now that she has once again reached her usual high standard, she will be leading the rest of the Hamburg State Ballet company in a television film of Balanchine's *Serenade*, with another Balanchine work *Concerto Barocco*.

This programme will soon be seen on German television, possibly making another milestone for ballet in this controversial dimension.

Lacking a permanent Opera Ballet at present, this work is carried out by members of the ballet company in the recent new production of *The Bartered Bride*.

The popular *Furiant* and *Polka* scenes, led by soloists Christa Kempf, Heinz Schmiedel, Joachim Weinberg and Heinz Clauss, were danced with lively zest, brought forth spontaneous applause from a packed house. Credit for all productions must be attributed to the work put in by the Ballet Master, Gustav Blank and producer Dr. Günther Rennert, the latter having formerly produced for Covent Garden.

I predict that the brilliant technique and versatile artistry of Christa Kempf, a young soloist who recently scored a great triumph in *Concerto Barocco*, also in the wonderfully exciting and dramatic role of the seductive cabaret dancer in Peter van Dyck's *Peau de Chagrin*, must surely make her one of tomorrow's leading ballerinas.

ROBIN HAMILTON-WEBB

BELGRADE

PREMIÈRE OF NEW BALLET

IN Belgrade at the end of October a new ballet was performed entitled *The Ballade of the Wandering Moon*, on the music of young Yugoslav composer Dušan Radić. Seeking a more complex theatrical language the authors of the ballet have tried to combine spoken rhymes, danced movements, music and painting elements, and in this way surpass the frame of a traditional ballet.

Rich in rhythm, the light and not pretentious musical language of Dušan Radić has inspired Mira Sanjina to create a charming choreography. Basing her choreography on elements of modern ballet expression and moving from classical forms to "rock and roll" Sanjina has perhaps insisted a little too much on the erotic moments of the dance. But it should be pointed out that there are several very nicely solved scenes (the stylisation of a soccer game; the dance of gamins), which show the ability of Sanjina to skilfully transpose everyday elements into a ballet.

The main part was danced successfully, both as an actor and as a dancer, by Marian Jaguš. Pavle Minčić read the rhymes perfectly. Young ballerinas Višnja Djordjević and Lidija Pilipenko have brought much charm to their roles. The ensemble and other soloists have also put much effort into following the choreographer's ideas.

The scenery and stage settings were done

very successfully by Dušan Ristić with an especially beautiful scene in the episode on the Moon.

The orchestra of the Belgrade Opera was on the opening night conducted by Oskar Danon, while later performances were by the young conductor Angel Surev.

Yugoslav Ballet News

In Sarajevo, the capital of the Republic of Bosnia and Hercegovina, the 10th Anniversary of the first Ballet Performance has been celebrated. On this occasion the artists from Sarajevo have performed, for the first time, the ballet *Cinderella* by Prokofiev. The choreographer was Franjo Horvat and the main parts were interpreted by Neda Pavela, Medo Imanić and Anton Marinić.

Soviet dancers Tatjana Zimina and German Janson will soon guest in Belgrade. They will dance main roles in *Giselle* and *Swan Lake*.

On the occasion of the celebration of the Centennial of the Croatian National Theatre in Zagreb, which will be held at the end of this year, Radić's *Ballade of the Wandering Moon* will be premiered. The choreographer, as in Belgrade, will be Mira Sanjina.

M. ZAJCEV-DARIĆ

NEXT MONTH JOHN HAYLOCK REVIEWS THE
BELGRADE OPERA AND BALLET COMPANY'S SEASON IN CAIRO

AMSTERDAM

DURING November the Nederlands Ballet presented two famous Bolshoi dancers: Raissa Struchkova and Yuri Zhdanov in *Giselle*. The Dutch audience was swept off its feet by these great artists and gave them an overwhelming reception. The enterprising director of the company, Sonia Gaskell must be thanked for having given the Dutch audience the chance to see these wonderful dancers in their famous roles. Alexandra van Rhijn, coached by Struchkova, danced the Queen of the Wilis in this performance.

In December George Skibine arrived in Holland to produce his *Concerto* for the company. Leading parts in this ballet, on a piano concerto by Jolivet and costumes by Roger Chailloux, were danced by Joan Cadzov and Peter Reilly.

Peter Appel, a member of the company, presented his first choreography *Spleen*. The ballet was commissioned by the City of Amsterdam, which every year gives a combined commission for choreography, music and designs. Peter Appel chose Hans Kox as composer and Henk Perdok for the designs and based his ballet on Sophocles tragedy of Orestes.

The Amsterdam Ballet opened the season with a ballet by Walter Gore *Parade* on Benjamin Britten's "Young Person's Guide to the Orchestra." The work is meant as a presentation of the whole company and has costumes by Ronald Wilson. Gore has not tried to identify each dancer with an instrument, nor the other way round, but preferred to interpret the "colour" of a group

of instruments by a group of dancers. Gore's second new work *De Kruik* (The Jar) is based on a story of the same name by Pirandello and used music by A. Casella with decors and costumes by Niels Hamel. The leading parts were taken by Philip Kaesen, Corrie van Gorp, Johan Mittertreiner and Robert Kaesen. Johan Verdoner, inspired by music of Willem Landré, made a short plotless ballet *Nocturne*. In December the company presented two guests artists: Sonia Arova and her husband Job Sanders. They danced the *Don Quichotte* pas de deux and the leads in a work by Sanders, *Bachianas Brasileiras* on Villa Lobo's music. Later on their places in this ballet were taken by Christina Gallea and Philip Kaesen.

Robert Kaesen presented his third work for the company *De Kameleons* (The Chameleons). He used Bartók's Sonata for two pianos and percussion, and the beautiful decor and costumes of Roger Chailloux. The leading dancers were Christina Gallea, Philip Kaesen and Chris Torenbos.

In January a very beloved ballerina appeared as guest artist with the company: Rosella Hightower. Together with Alexandre Kalioujny she danced the *Black Swan* pas de deux and, for Holland, a new pas de deux by John Taras *Soirée Musicale*. Hightower was given a tremendous ovation by a packed house.

Another wonderful and exciting event has been the visit of the Moissejev ballet.

INE RIETSTAP

HELD OVER UNTIL NEXT MONTH HOPE SHERIDAN'S REPORT FROM NEW YORK

FOR the opening four days of our Xmas Season the S.B.M. boldly brought Maurice Béjart and the very modern Ballet du XX Siècle du Théâtre Royal de la Monnaie de Bruxelles into this citadel of balletic "lavender and old lace," where tutus, pointes and classicism are sure of appeal and modernism may meet with a cold reception. This latter certainly proved true for Béjart's *Orphée*, a full length ballet in two acts and eight tableaux to musique concrète by Pierre Henry. Ultra modern in conception and involved in evolution this ballet was clearly incomprehensible to many of the audience and a thinnish house become even thinner after the first interval. Things were not helped by the two and a half pages of programme notes, which were written in such an abstract and highbrow style that they were practically meaningless.

I was sitting near to one of the great ballerinas of Diaghilev's Ballets Russes. To me she is always outspoken and often critical. I think her opinion worthy of record. "This is not dancing as I know it. It is acrobatics. There is no beauty, as I understand it. But Ballet must develop as the rest of the world develops. This is how the moderns express themselves in the dance; we must try to understand." When I asked her if she would have danced in *Orphée* she replied, "Yes, I think I would. Why not?" I found a lot in this ballet to ponder over and I regretted that I could not see it again. It is not possible to form a valid opinion in one performance. I last heard "musique concrète" by Henry here two years ago. It is now more restrained, less "shocking" and at times even evocative. It has come to stay; again, we must try to understand. But whatever their opinion on the ballet, all were impressed by the really powerful dancing of Béjart.

For the balance of his visit Béjart produced three performances of *Hommages à Stravinsky*, a series of three ballets by that composer. I was glad to see *Pulcinella* again, a ballet Béjart gave us at Xmas 1958. I then wrote for *Ballet Today* that I found it one of the most attractive ballets I had seen here. I hold this opinion just as firmly. It just bubbles with fun, good dancing and a nice décor.

Jeu de Cartes, to choreography by Janine Charrat, proved to be a nicely balanced little ballet, with really excellent décor and costumes by Germain Casado. The dancing also reached a high standard, André Leclair as the Joker, Andrée Marlière as the Queen of Hearts and Dolores Laga as the Queen of Spades being outstanding.

Expressionism in Ballet has come a long way since Diaghilev produced *Sacre du Printemps* in Paris in 1913, to choreography by Nijinsky. Béjart may be said to have brought the choreography up to date and his version is very modern and at times almost brutal in its realism. Though Tania Bari and Germain Casado danced with fine effect I felt that the honours went to the large male corps de ballet, which danced with a virility and co-ordination not often seen. The success of this ballet owed much to the masterly direction of the Monte Carlo orchestra by André Vandernoot.

We have seen Béjart here before, but his modernist, individual work has been blended with the more orthodox. The S.B.M. took a sporting gamble in putting on *Orphée* here and I, for one, was sorry to see that it did not come off. Where there is much discussion there must be some interest and I have not heard so much argument since the première of Sagan's *Rendezvous Manqué*.

For the second half of the Season the

S.B.M. played safe, like the small boy who redeemed the cracker under auntie's chair by subsequent impeccable behaviour. Paris Opera Ballet gave us four performances of old favourites, bringing their first team to dance them. *Soir de Fête*, to music by Delibes and choreography by Leo Staats, was colourful, with some nice ensembles, Amiel and van Dijk combining well with the corps de ballet. A programme innovation this year was the grading of the dancers. Thus we could study dancers from the Grands Sujets, Petits Sujets, Coryphées and First Quadrille. The Fokine-Stravinsky *L'Oiseau de Feu* was danced in true Opera tradition by Marjorie Tallchief and Skibine, with Bozzoni and the newly promoted étoile Jacqueline Rayet. I have seen a better décor for this ballet.

To me *Etudes* means London Festival, Toni Lander and John Gilpin, with the memory of the fantastic reception they got from the packed house of tough world pressmen at the Press show just before the Prince's Wedding Gala. But Paris also can dance this attractive themeless ballet with the vivid Bessy well supported by Labis and Flindt. We all enjoyed *Giselle*. It is terribly easy to be critical here, comparing the interpretations of the great ballerinas. I thought Amiel a shade too coquettish in the first act, just missing the betrayed innocence of the peasant girl. But her dancing in the second act was quite delightful, truly a disembodied spirit. Van Dijk was a graceful Albrecht. Bozzoni is always a convincing Hilarion and Rayet not only danced fluently but was authoritative as the Queen.

Les Sylphides, ever welcome here, showed Amiel and van Dijk to advantage. The corps de ballet was uniformly excellent and it was not difficult to select in one's mind one or two girls who must soon reach "première danseuse". I was not greatly impressed by *Phédre*, by Jean Cocteau to music by Georges Auric and choreography by Lifar. The complicated mythological theme was difficult to follow and I found the action disjointed. Bessy and Labis certainly made the most of what Lifar had to offer, though the blonde ballerina did not look her best with a somewhat unattractive black wig.

Monte Carlo always gives us some attractive ballet to round off a Season and this year was no exception. *Le Palais de Cristal*, to music by Bizet, choreography by Balanchine and some fine colour effects in the costumes by Léonor Fini is a themeless ballet set in three movements, danced respectively by Tallchief and Skibine, Amiel and Bozzoni and Motte with Labis. Both dancing and production were of a very high standard and the ensembles beautifully tied in with the corps de ballet.

Thus another most enjoyable Winter Season is behind us and we await with pleasurable anticipation the arrival of London Festival Ballet for Easter.

Although I normally reserve my ballet visits to Nice for the all too rare occasions when Ballet is given at the fascinating open-air Roman theatre at Cimiez in the summer, I could not resist going to see Anton Dolin, John Gilpin and Lyane Daydé in *Giselle* at the Theatre du Palais de la Méditerranée on January 12 and 15.

I have seen Daydé in the title role several times and have much admired her very sensitive interpretation, which essentially demands an Albrecht of corresponding quality. Until quite recently, though critics have been unstinting in their praise of Gilpin's technique, some have been hesitant

in giving him equal marks for dramatic ability. Could he show this ballerina to her best advantage? I had discussed with Dolin his acceptance of the role of Hilarion. For there is no dancer who has played Albrecht with more success and with so many of the world's great ballerinas. What did he think of dancing Hilarion? Dolin does not see Hilarion as a minor part. He considers that the portrayal of the forester, with his primitive jealousy, his crude revenge and subsequent bitter regret and death before the Wilis must be woven into the fabric of the ballet if it is to reach full expression. Hilarion is not just a nasty little man, as so often shown; he is intensely human, child of his environment, a victim of destiny. This is not a role for some dancer who cannot be fitted in elsewhere.

It was with a nice relaxed anticipation that I took my seat just behind Jean Périssou, conductor of the Nice Orchestra. For I had no intention, *pace* your Editor, of writing up this evening for *Ballet Today*. But I so thoroughly enjoyed this *Giselle* that I feel compelled to pass on my impressions. The theatre is not large and the audience were clearly mostly balletomanes, among them the Marquis de Cuevas, whose high courage had brought him from a sick-bed.

I think that it was the extraordinarily natural, almost intimate, production that made this such a worthwhile *Giselle*. There was no obvious "stagecraft," which is of course stagecraft in its best form. One almost felt present among the dancers as the story unfolded. Daydé was entirely convincing as the peasant girl; timid, then youthfully eager to dance before her lover, finally heartrending in her disillusionment and death. Gilpin soon proved his dramatic power; first the insouciant young aristocrat, then overwhelmed by the realisation of the tragedy his duplicity has caused. Dolin had clearly carefully studied his Hilarion. Entering as a bluff woodsman, axe on shoulder, to court his girl he finds a rival, who haughtily repulses him. Then the discovery that the young man is of noble birth, whose intentions can scarcely be honourable, raises him to a fury of jealousy. One could see the tortured mind working as he plans revenge.

The dancing in both acts was of a very high standard and this includes the Nice Opera Corps de Ballet, upon which Françoise Adret can be sincerely congratulated. The costumes and décor by Wladimir Jedrinsky were excellent and Périssou effectively tied in the dancers with his orchestra.

With so many famous dancers now "freelancing" perhaps we shall see more Ballet evenings of this quality. This *Giselle* was no "pot boiler," but a production of great charm and sincerity.

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RECORD GUIDE

There is no question that stereo is another great step forward in the world of the gramophone. The increased enjoyment is truly remarkable that you get from the spread of the orchestra, the depth and richer quality, and the separation of the instruments. I knew what I was missing but it was not until I had my own stereo set-up in my own flat that I really appreciated the full thrill. Although it is from the earliest issues of stereo records, I would suggest the Beecham's *Schéherazade*, HMV ASD251, rightly heads the list for a ballet-goer's library. His performance is unique (see *Ballet Today*, June 1958) and in stereo the threads of this fantastic tapestry, blazing with colour, fall into place with such beauty, clarity and naturalness.

GRADUATION BALL

To follow on, could one do better than Lichine's enchanting ballet to Johann Strauss' lilting music on Decca SXL2250? Willi Boskovsky can get from the V.P.O. the sweep, the tenderness, the gaiety and the carefree sparkle that has rarely been achieved by other far more experienced and better known conductors. What life it is given by stereo! The small touches make themselves felt and you are there in the audience, or possibly in that very ballroom, and it is with an excited but nevertheless sad heart that you hear those cadets march away at the end of such a wonderful party. But you are lucky—you can enjoy that ball again and again! And also the fill-up, Weber's *Invitation to the Dance* which is the music to Fokine's masterpiece *Le Spectre de la Rose* (Mono LXT5610).

NATIONAL DANCES

With Brahms' help, the road to success for Dvorak started with his first set of *Slavonic Dances* and by the time the second set was orchestrated, he was able to command ten times as much for his labours. All sixteen items are based on Czech folk dances and many of them are still amongst the most popular pieces of music heard today. Antal Dorati, conducting the Minneapolis S.O., Mercury AMS16046-7, gives a lively account of them and you may well find that the lesser known become your favourites. The last side is the overture and dances from *The Bartered Bride* by Smetana (Mono MMA11029-30).

If the complete sets are too much, Fritz Reiner and the V.P.O. give a good selection on one side of Decca SXL2249, with eight of Brahms' *Hungarian Dances* on the other. He holds back more than Dorati in the Dvorak but goes flat out in the Brahms—to excess, I think, at times. Nevertheless his renderings are acceptable (Mono LXT5609).

Bartok made a deep study of Hungarian folk dances but his resultant works differ greatly from those of the above composers. They conform, nevertheless, to the folk rhythms and melodic characteristics even though the themes are often original. Dorati, with the Philharmonia Hungarica, conducts with real understanding his *Dance Suite*, Mercury AMS16068, and can be thoroughly recommended to those whose inclinations lean this way. The coupling is *Deux Portraits* and pieces from *Mikrokosmos* (Mono MMA11121).

Stereophonically all these records are very good. There is great depth and the instruments stand out clearly but without exaggeration. The Minneapolis strings, however, are inclined to be hard.

IMPROMPTU AU BOIS

This should prove a most popular record, Decca SXL2252, as besides Saint-Saëns' *Danse Macabre* and *Le Rouet d'Omphale*, Jean Martinon, conducting the Paris Conservatoire Orchestra, thoroughly enters into the spirit of the two main items, Massine's *Jeux d'enfants* (Debussy) and Ruth Page's *Impromptu au Bois* choreographed to Ibert's hilarious *Divertissement*. This was originally the incidental music to *The Italian Straw Hat* and, if you have any fun in you at all, I really do not think you can resign yourself to be without its sly and often boisterous humour. Its subtle wit is the perfect antidote to the over-serious and stereo greatly helps in making its point (Mono LXT5612).

MUSICAL MERRY-GO-ROUND

The scene of this record, HMV. CSD1333, is a fairground, circus or carnival to which each composer contributes his music. Two of the pieces, *Carousel Waltz* and *La Ronde* are treated so that they appear to come from the roundabouts as they revolve. It is amazingly effective. However, the main interest to ballet-goers is Ibert's *Clowns Dance* from the M-G-M film, *Invitation to the Dance*, Stravinsky's *Circus Polka*, the waltz from Khachaturian's *Masquerade*, the gopak from Moussorgsky's *Sorochinski Fair* and *Visions d'Art* from Roland Petit's little gem of ballets, *Les Forains* to Sauguet's music. How I wish we could have a complete recording of this score as well as others of Sauguet's. Robert Irving and Douglas Gamley share the conducting (Mono CLP1409).

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NEW BOOKS

Classical Ballet: its Style and Technique. By Joan Lawson. Illustrated by Peter Revitt. Adam & Charles Black, 25s.

If you begin to read this book at Page 1 you will find much food for thought and argument, for there are few books on ballet with such a high irritant value and as such it ought to be read by dancers, despite muddled style, plagues of adjectives and slap-dash inaccuracies. These are, unfortunately, frequent—for example, the misnaming of dancers and characters, the quoting as off point what was in fact on, praising a ballet as by one choreographer when it was in fact by another, and commenting upon the effect of Cecchetti's work as teacher to the Diaghilev Ballet as displayed in *Apollon* (1928) when he had ceased to be company ballet master seven years earlier.

Unfortunately, I am afraid most readers will ignore my advice, reading title, foreword and acknowledgments before leaving the art and turning to the matter. To entitle a book "Classical Ballet: its Style and Technique" is asking for trouble if the book is intended primarily for dancers, since nearly every dancer is convinced that he alone knows precisely what classical ballet is—and, furthermore, 99 per cent of them have the firm intention of committing their views to paper one day. Consequently, it may only suggest sour grapes if I say how far short of the goal at which it aims this book falls; but let's hope it goads someone else into filling the gaps (for example, one of the few people who could do it comprehensively, Antony Tudor, who incidentally is not mentioned from cover to cover).

If this book had been entitled "Some Thoughts about Ballet" it could have included the appreciation of the work of de Valois, Ashton and Fonteyn with which one obviously agrees, but with which—given the existing title—the book seems a little overloaded; as it is, the neat little foreword by Dame Ninette herself leaves one unprepared for the manner and matter of what follows. The acknowledgments contain the name of practically every living authority one can think of and make one expect that Miss Lawson, having allowed all their ideas to germinate, has produced a book containing and comparing the gist of all this. Unhappily this is not so, and what a pity nobody was, apparently, to offer criticisms, suggestions and advice, for that is what the book is sadly in need of.

To select only three quotations, only Peter Revitt could do justice to a drawing of some movements out of space to complement all those moving through space, according to Miss Lawson—but that would be mixing this artist's two styles, the serious of which give the book a fine appearance of (if I dare use the word any more) spaciousness. I am particularly fond of the two perspective drawings on page 47. And what can Miss Lawson mean when she states categorically that "The hips and shoulders must always face the same plane"? Finally, I would give a good deal to hear my friend the late Lionel Bradley's comment upon:

"Style is conveyed through the Ports de Bras of classical dance, because it is within the Ports de Bras that it is first possible to distinguish the subtle differences to be made between a classical, a romantic and a modern ballet if they are based on the academic rules and technique."

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SAN FRANCISCO

San Francisco Ballet
in *Concerto Barocco*

by JACK ANDERSON

SAN FRANCISCO, a cosmopolitan city in a beautiful natural setting, has long cherished the arts. Results have been sometimes elegant, sometimes shaggily Bohemian, frequently vivacious and stimulating—characteristics of the city's dance activities as well as of its poetry or painting.

The leading dance organization is the San Francisco Ballet, America's oldest ballet company, yet the company least known to American balletomanes. For many years, it rarely travelled. Recently, however, it has visited other American cities and has made several successful State Department-sponsored foreign tours.

The company was founded in 1933 to supply dancers for the San Francisco Opera. But from the beginning, under Adolph Bolm, its first director, and Serge Oukrainsky, who succeeded him in 1938, independent evenings of ballet were staged.

When Oukrainsky appointed Willam Christensen company director in 1939, the Ballet began its long and happy association with the Brothers Christensen—Willam, Harold and Lew, three dancing brothers who had been associated with the Balanchine-Kirstein American Ballet Caravan.

Under Willam Christensen the company presented new ballets plus several classics. One of them, *Nutcracker*, survives as a Christmas tradition. Also at this time, Harold Christensen became director of the company school, now the second largest of its kind in the United States and one of two possessing a Ford Foundation grant.

After Willam Christensen left in 1951 to

organize the University of Utah's ballet department, Lew Christensen became director and in 1952 instituted a plan whereby the company can exchange dancers and ballets with the New York City Ballet.

Under the Christensens the young dancers dance with verve and discipline. Currently, principal dancers are Jocelyn Vollmar, Sally Bailey, Fiona Fuerstner, Virginia Johnson, Roderick Drew, Julien Herrin and Michael Smuin.

Like the New York City Ballet, the company is sometimes accused of stressing technique above interpretation. But Lew Christensen will reply that he believes in developing the total dancer and that only when technique is mastered can a dancer become an effective interpreter.

Lew Christensen has created a repertoire which bears his personal stamp as choreographer. Among his works are some effervescent ballets celebrating the triumph of love, the joy of living, and the delight of the body in beautiful movement—ballets which, to quote the title of one, view the world *Con Amore*.

Although noted for comedies and abstractions, Christensen has also produced effective serious ballets and in *The Lady of Shalott*, for example, examines tragic aspects of the love he elsewhere exalts.

His best ballets include the abstractions *Sinfonia* (Boccherini), *Danza Brillante*

Jocelyn Vollmar and Roderick Drew of the San Francisco Ballet.



San Francisco Ballet

Left: Kent Stowell and Sally Bailey

Below: Fiona Fuerstner



Repertoire includes older ballets by Wilde, among them the especially successful *Miraculous Mandarin* (Bartok) and *On the Beach* (Cascario). Wilde plans a revision of his *Variations for Fun*, a ballet after Hawthorne's *Rappaccini's Daughter*, and a balletic comedy of manners. Howard is choreographing *Waltzes* and Jack Johannes may produce Britten's *Simple Symphony*.

Across the Bay from San Francisco is Raoul Pausé's Oakland Civic Ballet, founded last year, and currently presenting *La Boutique Fantasque* and a *Beauty and the Beast* to Delius music for children in the schools. Pausé hopes to present adult programmes of ballets to Copland and Walter Piston music and excerpts from *Raymonda*.

San Francisco, birthplace of Isadora Duncan, has a modern dance movement as active as the ballet.

The most consistently interesting modern dance group is probably that of Ann Halprin, although it does not often perform in the city. Much of the year Miss Halprin works with her dancers on the "Dance Deck," the outdoor stage adjoining her suburban home. The public performances which grow out of this work usually contain advances in the development of her so-called non-objective style.

In a statement prepared especially for this article, Miss Halprin says she would like her dances "to be a complete surprise each time I do one" and hopes the audience will share "this surprise in a spirit of inquiry, involvement, and delight."

Although she began as a dramatic dancer, she believes her present style "is more human, not less so." Among the sources of this style was the following incident: "It happened that one day I was looking at sunlight on a tree. For no reason at all,

(Mendelssohn), and *Dances Concertantes* (Stravinsky); the comic *Con Amore* (Rossini); the Americana *Filling Station* (Thomson); the dramas, *Lady of Shalott* (Bliss) and *Jinx* (Britten); and the Christmas spectacle, *Beauty and the Beast* (Tchaikovsky).

Last spring the company gave the longest ballet season ever presented in the United States outside New York. Its success has prompted another long season this spring. New productions are Balanchine's *Symphony in C*, and two works by Lew Christensen: one to Hindemith music and one about Adam and Eve to an orchestral score by John Lewis of the Modern Jazz Quartet.

THERE are several other important dance organisations in San Francisco.

Some soloists from the San Francisco Ballet itself established an excellent summer company last year, Ballet 1960.

Another company was Bay Area Ballet, founded in 1957 by Carolyn Parks, Leona Norman and Vern Nerden. Among its achievements was the presentation of works by the city's two leading younger choreographers, Marc Wilde and Michael Smuin.

The company has recently merged with Pacific Ballet, organised by Alan Howard, formerly of Ballet Russe de Monte Carlo, only a few months ago. The new group, with Howard as director and Wilde as principal choreographer, will perform in San Francisco and on tour.



The Pacific Ballet
Grace Doty and Jack Johannes
in a scene from *The Miraculous Mandarin*

Contemporary Dancers Foundation
Puppet Show for People
Photo: Chic Lloyd

and no apparent preparation, I became intensely aware of a foghorn in the bay, a red berry at my side, and passing birds overhead. . . . And I saw each thing as a separate element related in unpredictable ways . . . the brutality of logic was overcome and the mere sense of being was sufficient. Here is a place where each thing can be itself—where each person can be himself."

Miss Halprin concludes with words from Hung Tzu-ch'eng: "If the mind is not overlaid with wind and waves, you will always be living among blue mountains and green trees. If your nature has the creative force of Nature itself, wherever you may go, you will see fishes leaping and geese flying."

The most active modern dance group is the Contemporary Dancers, organised by director-choreographer J. Marks in 1955, and the only group currently possessing its own theatre.

Although the company's ambitions sometimes exceed its capacities, its presentations are usually marked by a concern for effective decor and lighting, unhackneyed music,



and a willingness to grapple with important themes. Forthcoming productions include a revised *Rite of Spring*; *Hallelujah*, based on hymn tunes; and a three part work inspired by the Theban trilogy of Sophocles.

Like many American colleges, those in the San Francisco area teach modern dance. Most of this work is on an elementary level. But San Francisco State College is fortunate to have on its dance faculty Welland Lathrop, an able choreographer who also directs a small modern dance group of his own.

Dance is a vigorous art in San Francisco, reflecting the growing American regional ballet movement. Quite clearly, the boom is on. But the boom also has its problems.

One problem which has affected other cities, although San Francisco is still remarkably free of it, is the desire of everyone to have a company of his own, resulting in innumerable small groups which spread thin available talent and do ineffectually what combined forces might do well.

But if San Francisco groups continually strive toward excellence and avoid the jealousies and vanities which create factions and splinter groups, the future of dance in San Francisco would seem to be very bright indeed.

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